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Government  
Publications

G-62



G-62

ISSN 1180-5218

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 36th Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 10 February 1997

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 10 février 1997

Standing committee on  
general government

City of Toronto Act, 1996

Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto



Chair: Bart Maves  
Clerk: Lynn Mellor

Président : Bart Maves  
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Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Monday 10 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Lundi 10 février 1997

*The committee met at 0903 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

DAVID CATHRO

**The Chair (Mr Bart Maves):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the standing committee on general government. Our first deputant this morning is Mr David Cathro. Welcome, sir. You have 10 minutes this morning to make your presentation. At the end of that 10 minutes, if there's any time remaining, I believe it will go to the opposition caucus for questions, to the Liberals. Go ahead, sir.

**Mr David Cathro:** I'd like to thank you for allowing me to appear. In view of the fact that the government seems to have no interest in the opinions of citizens and has promised to ignore our views, I'd particularly like to thank those who have worked so hard to ensure that at least some hearings would take place in spite of the clear attempt to ram this legislation through with a minimum of citizen participation.

I'll attempt to express my opposition to this bill in relation to the costs of amalgamation, how it affects the representation of citizens, how it suspends democracy and, time willing, I'll suggest a few amendments that in my opinion might be made.

First of all, looking at the cost, the now famous or infamous flyer, Toronto for All of Us, states, "One Toronto means savings." How these savings are to be achieved remains a little unclear to me, but we're told that an accounting firm, KPMG, has done a report which says this is the case.

There's also a TV commercial I've seen in which I think an amateur electrician shows us how a few brightly coloured cables are less susceptible to short-circuits than a larger number of ugly cables. From this I took the meaning that municipal organizations created by electricians are always preferable.

Not convinced by this advertising, I wanted some way of predicting what might happen when a group of municipalities such as ours is amalgamated.

Like the government, I have neither the expertise nor the experience to make such predictions, so I started to

search for information. Fortunately, reports have been prepared, I found, based on examples where such amalgamations have been carried out and the results on costs are available. Common to all such examples is that amalgamation has resulted in increased costs, not savings. Although the salary of one mayor is clearly less than the combined salaries of seven, for example, there are other factors which mean that the total costs of operating a megacity are not only higher but much higher than those of the original group of municipalities. There's clear evidence that there are "diseconomies" of scale which operate to cancel out the specific items on which savings are made and result in an overall cost increase.

I'll not attempt to go into specific numbers in the time available here, but I'm sure the committee is familiar with the report, for instance, by the Wendell Cox consultancy, to name but one such report, which has clearly presented data based on several examples from the United States. There does not appear to be any example on record where amalgamation has resulted in reduced costs for running a megacity.

We must thus conclude that based on the evidence, a megacity will not result in savings. It will instead cost more to run than what we have at present.

I'll turn now to representation. Under the heading "Nurturing our Neighbourhoods" in the same flyer, Toronto for All of Us tells us that although municipal boundaries will disappear, individual communities will not. The streets will still be the same streets, the people the same people. This seems reasonable and quite believable but it misses the point. The relevant change made by the proposed legislation will be in how people are able to access their elected representatives.

The same reports that deal with costs also give a good idea of what is to be expected in this area. It's been found that the larger megacity governments are less accountable, less responsive, more susceptible to control by moneyed interests and less attuned to community and neighbourhood needs. The examples show that secession from the megacity has become an issue in many of these cases. The central core residents of one megacity seceded with their feet by moving out. I found this interesting since I've already had several acquaintances mention that this is how may vote on the megacity in Toronto. This sounds like a recipe for the traditional American city core: empty and dangerous when offices close in the evening.

Based on the case studies available, the megacity will not serve the population as well as the current system, as well as costing considerably more to run. There's nothing to suggest that our megacity will be an exception to this rule. It is not a good deal for the citizens of Metro, and

this clearly reduced efficiency is the exact opposite of the declared intention of the government.

I'll now turn to this threat to democracy. I don't suggest that the government intends to end democracy. It's been duly elected and will face the electorate again when it should do. However, the board of trustees and transition team clauses of Bill 103 suspend democracy for an indeterminate length of time. These parts must be opposed as evidence of an erosive force which could lead progressively to a government which one day may proclaim when election time comes, "We have no choice; we can't afford it," a phrase we've heard in other contexts many times in the last few years.

**0910**

The board of trustees, first of all: Reading these portions of the bill, I felt I was in a bad dream and had to pinch myself several times. The bill says that the government will appoint a board of trustees and will fix its rate of pay. Although Bill 103 has yet to become law, this unelected body has already been created and is operating, as far as is known, behind closed doors.

The board of trustees, responsible to the minister, is charged with controlling the operations of the old councils we elected at the last municipal elections to carry out our affairs until the end of 1997. By creating the board of trustees, Bill 103 effectively nullifies these elections. The decisions of the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court. On or after January 31, 1998, the minister "may" dissolve the board.

So we have a troika, appointed by the government, responsible only to the minister, above the law and charged with running our municipal affairs. They're already in office and will be at least until January 31, 1998, on which date the minister "may" dissolve the board of trustees. I understand "may" to infer that he "may not." If, as I suspect, the amalgamating process is not as smooth, unlike what an amateur electrician led us to believe, a year from now the minister may, even if acting in good faith, keep the board of trustees in place to complete the difficult job. The elected representatives of the new city now would also be under control for a further indeterminate period.

There are similar points against the transition team, which is also above the law. It deals more with transition rather than with controlling the old councils, but it's also very undemocratic in its origination and its mainly being above the law.

At this stage of reading Bill 103, I consulted a map to make sure I was in Metro Toronto, Ontario and Canada. I was embarrassed, ashamed and angered to find that I was. But I'm not alone in finding these sections of the bill repulsive and completely unacceptable in my city, province and country.

It seems that we're being given a piece of legislation that will create for us a megacity which will result in less responsive local government and at a higher cost.

In order to ensure that this is put in place, it will be necessary to suspend democracy for at least a year. Further, we're paying for an advertising campaign to convince ourselves that: "It's all right. Don't worry." In a word, it's unbelievable even for this uncommonly senseless revolution.

Understand that what I'm saying here is with the idea of perhaps making amendments, so I have a few suggestions.

The board of trustees should be dissolved immediately. There shouldn't be a board of trustees.

The proposed transition team should be made within the law, stripped of its dictatorial powers and be responsible to a broader base than simply the minister.

The time schedule, this rushing through, should be slowed down. There have been attempts made at this which have to a small extent succeeded, but the time schedule must be changed.

Further, Bill 103 should become law only if there's a clear majority in its favour in the coming referenda, plebiscites, whatever you want to call them.

I've one other amendment which isn't on the printed paper, but I'd like to end on a humorous note, though I don't intend to be frivolous. I object to the name "Toronto" being used for the new city. I have a name which might honour the founder and predict the new city's chances of success. The name I'm suggesting would be the city of Leachmake in English; in French it could be pretty well the same thing. That's in one word. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Cathro. You've effectively used up your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this morning.

#### CATHERINE CRAGG

**The Chair:** Would Catherine Cragg please come forward. Good morning, Ms Cragg, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Catherine Cragg:** Good morning. My name is Catherine Cragg. I live in Toronto. I'm not a member of any political party. I don't even vote for any one party with any consistency. However, I vote and I try to keep informed.

I am here today because, for the first time that I can remember, I am appalled by what my government seems determined to do. I do not understand why this government is pushing Bill 103 and I don't think the public is being offered any satisfactory explanation.

First of all, the appointment of trustees to oversee current activities of the various Metro councils and the appointment of transition teams to implement Bill 103's provisions: We have duly elected mayors and councillors to whom we have entrusted the administration of our cities. Why are their functions being transferred to provincial appointees? I am especially thinking of their mandate to appoint senior administrators. Where is the justification for abandoning established democratic process? It's as though we've been conquered by some invading army and we now have to submit to their authority and give up our traditional practice.

Second, the government's insistence that it will not consider any major change to the substance of the bill: I read the papers; I listen. Those who are critical of the megacity plan and of the downloading of the costs of soft services are not just members of the opposition parties doing the knee-jerk thing. Critics include people whose

profession is the study of the workings of cities and the impact of various policies on efficiency, cost-effectiveness, responsivity and the like. They're economists, political scientists. They have studied cities in America and Europe. Other critics specifically include those whose advice has been sought in this context of what we do about the greater Toronto area and its governance to respond to the situation now.

There's the Golden report and the Who Does What report; both are not in line at all with Bill 103's downloading of soft services, nor is the board of trade. Where are the experts of comparable credibility, of comparable qualification, who think that Bill 103 is just fine? I haven't seen any of this.

Third and last, why does this bill have to be passed and its provisions implemented with such indecent haste? The changes proposed are massive and complex. They will directly affect everyone in Metro Toronto certainly, and I expect eventually everyone in the province, yet much of the detail, both financial and organizational, has yet to be articulated. Somehow the people of Ontario are supposed to accept unquestioningly that government knows best. But a lot of real, valid, difficult questions have been raised and they aren't answered. We can't buy into this.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs opened these hearings by saying: "We're at a historic moment in the life of this city. We have a one-time opportunity ahead of us to take advantage of the best ideas in government innovation and planning." Yes, we are at a historic moment. There simply have to be changes made to create some kind of structure, a coordination plan or something for the greater Toronto area, but the changes proposed in Bill 103 seem a weak response to that need. More to the point, the "best ideas in innovation and planning" are something they clearly are not.

Please, back off from Bill 103 and come back with a proposal that respects our tradition of local democracy and that answers the very serious errors in the present bill. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We have almost five minutes remaining for questions from the government caucus.

**Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York):** Thank you very much for appearing before us this morning. In the presentation that you've provided, you've hit three particular areas that are of concern to you. You were concerned about the haste with which you felt this was being suggested. When you look at the studies and the promotion of the need to find some answers to the issues that face us today, do you not regard those as legitimate forms of research and input in order to be able to make some changes?

**Ms Cragg:** I'm sorry. Which do I regard as —

**Mrs Munro:** Specifically, things like the Golden task force and the Crombie recommendations and so forth are all areas of research and of consultation and so forth, and yet you see this as a process that in your opinion has been very hasty.

**Ms Cragg:** No, I don't see that as hasty. It's the introduction of the legislation and the time line within which it's expected to be passed and implemented. No,

the reports, I think, are very valuable and I am disturbed by the bill's deviation from the recommendations we have. Where is the explanation for that? Advice has been sought and presented and disregarded.

0920

**Mrs Munro:** Not entirely.

**Ms Cragg:** Not in toto, but in major senses.

**Mrs Munro:** Is there someone else on the government side? Otherwise, I have another question.

**The Chair:** Yes: Mr Newman.

**Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre):** Good morning. My question, because I know we're running short on time and I want to hear what you have to say: Can you elaborate on your vision of what the future of municipal government would be in Metro?

**Ms Cragg:** I certainly have not much authority to speak but —

**Mr Newman:** If Bill 103 isn't what you see as the answer, can you suggest something for me and for the government side?

**Ms Cragg:** I think somehow we have to keep the local units a governable size. I can't remember the number but there have been figures cited; instead of amalgamation clear and simple, coordinating bodies for those things that do involve several jurisdictions.

**Mr Newman:** Is six plus the regional municipality the answer that's there today, or do we go to two or do we go to three or four?

**Ms Cragg:** I'd like to see it down to about two.

**Mr Newman:** So clearly what's there in place is not working. Is this what you're saying?

**Ms Cragg:** I don't think it works for the greater Toronto area, but could we get something to pull that together without losing the local accessibility and responsibility of what we have now, slightly larger but not huge?

**Mr Newman:** Okay, that's fine.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Cragg, for coming forward this morning and making your presentation.

**Ms Cragg:** Thank you very much for hearing me.

#### MARY CHURCH

**The Chair:** Would Mary Church please come forward. Good morning, Ms Church. You have 10 minutes this morning to make your presentation.

**Mrs Mary Church:** Honourable members, my name is Mary, but most people call me Babs Church. I have been living and working in Toronto for the past 25 years.

No one is more surprised than I am to be sitting here today and to have the opportunity to speak before a committee of 14 members of the Legislature. I have stepped forward, however, because, although I would describe myself as an apolitical person, I am trying to understand what Bill 103 means.

I am generally acknowledged to be a fairly intelligent person and I have certainly been a conscientious citizen. My husband and I have raised four children. They are strong, independent people who have their own responsible lives. I have worked as a teacher, a television producer, I've worked in advertising; I have done a lot of things. As a citizen, I have always thought it was important to study the issues, to try to understand them and to

vote for the people who would work towards making our country a fair and a good place to live for all of us. As a citizen, I pay my taxes, of course, and have thought it important to volunteer my time in the community.

One of the things I have felt most blessed by in this very fortunate life I have led is that I live in Canada. I have seen our country as a place of civility, a civilized society where there is a compact between the elected representatives and the citizens. Although our jobs are different, I see them as part of a whole and that we each value the contribution of the other. It would seem to me that it is my job as a citizen of such a country to be as thoughtful and well informed as possible and to concern myself with the issues at hand. For the second time in my life, I find myself stepping forward to ask some questions and to become more publicly vocal in this pursuit of my role as citizen.

I am here today because I do not know enough about this new creation, this megacity. Will it be a good place to live for me or the other 2.5 million people who call Toronto home? I find it strange that the government — my government — has introduced legislation that by all accounts will change many aspects of my life and yet appears to be indifferent to what I might think, what I might contribute. Where can I find the information I need to understand the ramifications of the new legislation? I've heard a number of political speeches and read some passionate editorials, columns and letters to the editor, but nowhere have I seen the kind of thoughtful and reasoned debate that the proposed changes merit.

I understand it is the intention of the government to have Bill 103 passed before the end of March. I gather that this urgency to move ahead with the legislation is to enable the politicians who are interested in serving on the new council to prepare themselves for the municipal elections to be held in November. What about moving those elections to the spring or fall of 1998? That must be within the power of the Legislature.

It seems to me that in addition to the lack of information, there is a great deal of misinformation. It would seem to me too that, convinced as they are of the rightness of the new initiatives, the government can offer citizens an opportunity to hear their arguments and thoughts on the subject, and interested citizens and groups can add their ideas to the mix. Who knows what interesting new solutions might arise?

I am not so cynical as to think, as has been suggested to me, that there is some kind of vendetta against Toronto from those in the rest of the province. I know we Torontonians all take ourselves far too seriously at times and think that unless it started from the big town, it doesn't exist, but I can't believe the members in the Legislature could or would act on such feelings. No, I refuse to feed into that particular paranoia.

I guess one of the other compacts that we all took for granted is that although every provincial government has authority, the legal right and in fact the responsibility to oversee municipal affairs, provincial governments do not interfere with the affairs of municipalities unless there is a most serious emergency: a bankruptcy, say, or a blatant misuse of municipal power. What are the demands of this time that compel the government to break this compact?

What is the emergency which calls forth the need for a board of trustees, not one of whom is an elected representative of the affected municipalities?

What better way to find out than to shift my point of view for a while and to walk a distance in your shoes, to change sides in the debate and to try to see things from the government's point of view?

Speaking as an elected representative, I have promised to save money and to lower taxes, to streamline government and to get rid of unnecessary levels in government and the civil service, surely a sensible course. Who could argue with that? But what would be the best way to accomplish this major challenge?

This is a job that will take a great deal of thought and study and, because of the profound effect it will have on people's lives, I will need to spread the word, talk about what I am going to do and get a broad understanding and consensus. This process, of course, takes time and can be rather messy. That's one way to go at it.

Perhaps there is another way, a way that could avoid all that trouble: "These are complex issues and ordinary people won't be able to grasp the intricacies of it all. Most of them don't really care, so why not administer the difficult pill in one big gulp? That way we'll be able to see if it's the right medicine, and of course, if that doesn't work, we can always adjust the prescription or try a different remedy entirely." I would certainly follow this course if I thought the patient were comatose or was showing no wish to live.

So as an elected representative I'm faced with two difficult choices. Which is better for the province and which of the two is more likely to be remembered positively by the electorate at election time?

I'm back in my own shoes again, and I'm much more comfortable; they are not such a snug fit as yours. I have decided to take another route to try to understand Bill 103. I'll tackle the bill piece by piece.

Section 16 strikes me as one of the more puzzling ones. Why, I wonder, do we need a transition team? But after a quick referral to business practice, I see that every merger needs a transition team to oversee the effective integration of the various disparate parts into a new and smooth-running whole. Okay, I'll buy that. But what power does this team require to get the job done effectively? And what about the newly elected council of 44 and their new council head? What is their role vis-à-vis the transition team? Are any of the members of the transition team elected by me or by my fellow citizens? And how long is this transition team to be around?

**0930**

Another section catches my eye, section 18: "The decisions of the transition team are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court." What does that mean and what are the limits of power on a group of people who are not elected by me or anyone else in Toronto? Is it possible that their actions cannot even be seriously challenged by anyone except the Minister of Municipal Affairs? Is that what that section means?

I can think of only one or two large cities in North America that have such a vibrant core of small neighbourhoods and communities. Section 4 of the bill suggests that the concerns of these neighbourhood commun-

ties will be represented by committees. How will these committees be created? Are they to be appointed? Elected? What kind of authority will they have?

What will be the effect of this legislation on the business community? How do they feel about the changes that are proposed? Will they stay, flee to the 905 area or to Ohio? What kind of projections have you made of the effect of this community on the economy?

I have raised a number of questions and there are many more. Do you not think it might be wise to slow down to try to answer some of them, to postpone the legislation for a few months and to develop a real dialogue with the people of Ontario?

Perhaps you will recall that at the beginning of the submission I mentioned that this is the second time I have stepped into a public debate about a public issue. The last time was in Quebec. We had moved to Montreal in 1954. There I was confronted with a government that worked to silence any kind of public debate about issues. It was the dying days of the oppressive Duplessis regime. I became part of Jean Lesage's Quiet Revolution. Once again public debate is being threatened, and so I come before you today.

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Thank you very, Ms Church. You have timed it exactly right.

#### NEIL NAIMAN

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Neil Naiman to come forward. Good morning, Mr Naiman, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Neil Naiman:** Thank you, members of the committee. My name is Neil Naiman and I was born in what was then the borough of York and I have lived and worked in the cities of Toronto and North York for the rest of my life and have come to the committee today.

Though I would like to devote the time I have in front of this committee to state my personal opposition to Bill 103 and present my strongly felt beliefs that this bill is an affront to the history of democracy in this city and province and is nothing more than an autocratic assault on our way of life, our institutions, our schools, our neighbourhoods in a malevolent attempt to attack the most vulnerable people and groups in this province, I will instead use my time to address the hearings on behalf of those who are unable to address the panel, the hundreds, thousands in fact, of English-as-a-second-language students I have taught over the last almost 25 years, some of whom have still not gained the linguistic skills, or certainly not the confidence, to appear before this committee.

I have been teaching English as a second language for more than 20 years in North York and in Toronto, and in that time I have heard hundreds, thousands of stories of immigrants who have come to this city and their reasons for choosing Toronto. They have heard from relatives, friends, in refugee camps, all over the world but also by word of mouth, that Toronto is a welcoming city, a city full of vibrant communities, a city which encourages immigrants to maintain their own culture while integrating into the new society, a city which designs unique programs to meet their different needs. They have all heard

of the successful multicultural and multiracial experiment that Toronto is and have chosen to come here and work extremely hard and build a better life and participate in the growth, harmony and prosperity of Toronto.

Many have left their homelands to start a new life with relatives. Many others have left their lands for better economic opportunities for themselves and their children. Others have left to escape regimes where democracy did not exist and have come here to seek the opportunity to participate in a democratic society where their voices might be heard.

They have told me they love Toronto, a city where neighbourhoods are vibrant and they can maintain their ethnic roots. They have told me about the variety of programs in language, citizenship, retraining, counselling and settlement that have been set up in the different cities in Metropolitan Toronto, programs they feel were set up to respond to their unique needs and to the unique needs of their community.

They are thankful for excellent public transportation, which has allowed them access to all parts of the city. They have even told me about their gratitude for the translation and other special services in their communities which allow them to understand and participate in their children's schools and in the broader society.

One student recently told me about a friend of hers who felt despondent because she could not help her child to learn to read in English because she herself did not understand enough English to help her child with her basic readers. The Toronto board, in its understanding of the needs of our large immigrant population, has provided labels in a variety of languages to accompany these readers so that parents can understand their children's work and participate in their education. This is but one small example of how our present structures have evolved to respond to the needs of our communities, including the different non-English-speaking communities.

This is the city they have chosen in hundreds of thousands. Without the influx of these immigrants, our community would not have grown and prospered and served as an economic engine for the whole province and, in fact, the entire country.

But now my students are troubled. Why, my students have asked me, should things change now and so quickly? Why, my students ask me, is the nature of the city going to change when these cities have learned to respond so well over the years to their needs? Why, my students ask me, is the government saying it will not listen to their voices in a referendum?

Why, they ask me, is the democracy they came here for being eroded? Have we not elected representatives to city councils and school boards who understand their needs? Why are we taking away their powers and putting these councils and school boards under non-democratic trusteeships, they wonder. How, they ask me, will they be able to communicate with an elected representative or school board trustee when they will be only a few of the tens of thousands of constituents, particularly when many of them do not have the language skills or confidence to make their wishes and demands heard.

Just as an aside, because I heard this on my way in this morning, the whole discussion from a colleague of

mine in fact, at York University about how the wards are going to be decided. In fact the wards traditionally have represented communities. There need to be public debates on how these wards are going to be set up, or else they will not represent any communities. These people will find themselves even more without a voice than they are now.

Many of them say this process reminds them of the situation in their countries which they ran away from. What is so terribly wrong with the way things are now, they ask. What is the terrible hurry, they wonder. If the government is trying to save money, they wonder, who is ultimately going to have to pay for their valued programs and services? Where is the proof, they ask me, that any money will be saved? They are afraid that they will lose many of their cherished services and still end up paying more in taxes and rent. They are scared and bewildered, for many have seen this process before and only know too well what can happen when democracy is hijacked.

These are their questions, asked in many languages and based on experiences that are beyond our wildest imaginations. They are scared and so am I: for them, for myself, for my family and for our city.

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** Thank you, Mr Naiman. I appreciate your attempting to speak for a lot of people who maybe are unable to speak here today because of the language challenge. In terms of your general thrust, you're in essence saying you have this fear for what's happening to basic fundamental rights and democratic rights. Now the government is saying this is an exaggeration, that they're following their mandate, being elected, and that, really, all this talk about democracy being threatened is an overreaction. Could you respond to that?

**Mr Naiman:** What can I say? I guess what some people would say and what my students have told me is that these things all begin with what appear to be, for some people, small, little erosions, and then it's one step at one time, and then the next day it's another step and the next day it's another. Before you know it, what was once democracy no longer exists.

0940

The previous deputant to this committee talked about the various components of Bill 103 which by themselves take away people's ability to challenge decisions made by non-elected representatives. My students have been able to develop relationships with board of education trustees for a very long period of time, because it's very difficult to get them to be involved in the school system and it takes a very long time. With the new system of Bill 104, which is still connected to Bill 103, they will not be able to develop that. They will not have their voices heard. Their democracy will be taken away from them.

**Mr Colle:** Again, in terms of a lot of the recent immigrants who are in Toronto, for instance, or North York or Scarborough, what are some of the countries that they're from?

**Mr Naiman:** I have in my class right now at York University, which is not typical of what was once the case, refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Iran, Lebanon, Somalia. These are people who have run away from regimes where particularly they felt they had no democracy and were trying to seek a life where they were

told we lived in a democratic society which respected their rights.

**Mr Colle:** So they have a firsthand, you might say, life experience in terms of their democracy being taken away from them.

**Mr Naiman:** Yes, a firsthand life experience, which, as I said, would shock many of us in this room if we knew the details of what these people had gone through.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Naiman, for coming forward this morning and making your presentation.

### JOE KAPOSI

**The Chair:** Would Mr Joe Kaposi please come forward. Good morning, Mr Kaposi. Thank you for the note.

**Mr Joe Kaposi:** I meant every word in there.

I want to thank the taxpayers of Ontario for this opportunity to represent several friends and acquaintances. My presentation may seem eclectic because it includes observations, conclusions, comparisons, deductions, classifications and decisions of many people. But I hope this presentation will not resemble the diarrhoea of mega-week announcements we experienced in January.

My name is Joe Kaposi and I have been a resident of Toronto, North York and East York for all but two years of my life. Those two years include periods of a few weeks to two months spent in Mexico, Europe, the US and eight other Canadian provinces in search of a better place to live, but I'm still looking.

I no longer belong to any one political party, because it seems necessary for some of us to play devil's advocate to whoever is in power to keep them honest. I also believe that some of us must comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. This practice becomes a virtuous circle in that when the afflicted become the comfortable, it is necessary to reafflict them, and this keeps people on their toes. Besides, there are at least two sides to every story. Since parliaments are really four- to five-year dictatorships, there must be a strong group to keep checks on governments to prevent them from raging out of control.

It seems we have this government to thank for arousing the conscientious citizens of Ontario to educate themselves in the processes as well as the possible outcomes of this party's agenda. For several months I have paid increasing attention to what is going on here. I have attended many sessions in the Legislature and followed question period religiously, if you can call taking the Lord's name in vain religious.

I have mixed feelings about this bill and its effects. An ancient Chinese curse says, "May you live in interesting times," and these are times of great changes. Globalization, aided by the Bretton Woods agreement of the late 1940s, forces us to adapt to living with people of many cultures and values and to think in terms of work rather than jobs. One of the effects of the changes is downsizing, good when one should lose weight, but dangerous when a government downsizes its own intelligence and ability to govern democratically.

Genuine communication is a two-way process. It can be fatal to a governing party when too many of its policymakers are dropouts from the school of effective

communication. If deficits and debts are out of control, these problems cannot be solved by a democratically elected government itself going out of control. Governments which do not discipline themselves or do not allow for consideration of alternatives are often punished by lengthy banishment to political wilderness; for example, the PC national party in 1993 and the former PC government of Saskatchewan, of which some members have been convicted of financial fraud by the courts and jailed. Bill 103 says that the trustees and transition team are not subject to the courts. What kind of fraud is this?

The feel-good advertisements, publications and speeches produced by this government and the so-called answers given during question period seem to suggest that the people of Ontario are so simpleminded that we will not notice the inconsistencies in what is said and what is done. The Premier pulls the switch in an advertisement, believing he can turn out the lights on intelligent thought. Politicians are already low in the public's trust. Would you buy an abused province from this man?

The debt and deficit problems are serious, and yet the finance minister claims that he can ease up on spending cuts. White is black and black is white.

"Let's put Ontario's students back at the head of the class." What class? What will the graduates of boot camps call out? Heil Harnick? Heil Harris?

We've had examples of drive-by shootings and senseless violence. Is mega-week drive-by legislation?

A news article in the Globe recently declared: "Ontario Government Kept Tabs on Callers. Manual for Information Hotline Ordered Detailed Reports on the Identity of Dissenters and Supporters." Big Brother is here.

Some final points on Bill 103, or the War Measures Act of Ontario. This bill includes the granting of absolute powers to unelected officials. If these extreme powers will not be used absolutely, as we are told, why grant them at all? This bill tries to solve a problem by creating potentially more serious problems. Toronto was not built in one day in 1953 or other years, but it can be destroyed in a much shorter time than it took to develop such a treasure. Bigger is better? The Second World War was the biggest, killing the most of any war. How many lives could be destroyed by Bill 103? Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Kaposi.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. You have just over two and a half minutes, Mr Marchese.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** Thank you, Mr Kaposi, for your thoughtful presentation. Mr Leach is quoted to have said: "All I have heard is, 'This is a bad thing to do.' But nobody's giving me any evidence it's bad." I've read enough of the people who have done these studies on amalgamation who have pointed out that it's not cost-effective at all and that they become essentially more bureaucratic. That's the evidence that I have seen, but he doesn't seem to have either read it or reflected on that. Can you guess at what kind of evidence he is looking for?

0950

**Mr Kaposi:** A small group of people from his riding, as well as myself — seven of us — met with him at 4:25 on Friday of last week. We tried as positively as possible

to present our concerns and to try to get some feedback on what he thought. I don't know if anybody here has tried to communicate with a brick wall, but that was what it was like. It was as if there were certain key words or phrases which were looked for in our questions and concerns, and then the usual party line or whatever is put out at us. It was something I expected. I had hoped maybe we could get some opening to this man's mind, but we couldn't.

**Mr Marchese:** Quickly, Mr Kaposi, because Ms Munro speaks about the fact that there have been so many studies — I'm not sure they're aware of those studies, by the way, or that they've looked at them. But none of them that I'm aware of speaks about eliminating the various local governments that we've got — none of them. In fact, Ms Golden, the person who had done the study most recent other than Mr Crombie, who could live with either amalgamating or the cities, as long as we did the GTA council — he speaks of that — doesn't say, "Get rid of the city." She said, "Create this greater council to deal with overlapping matters between Metro and the GTA." But none of the studies that I'm aware speaks of eliminating the cities. So they say: "We're not going hastily. We've done all these studies. They're up there. There's 60 of them, so it's time to move."

**Mr Kaposi:** That's exactly what Mr Leach started out to tell us on Friday at our meeting. He started out with the Golden report and so forth and so on. But I don't think he or the powers that be have taken these things into consideration. I think they have tried to put into the agenda what they want rather than what is good for Ontario.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Kaposi.

#### RUSSELL CHRISTIANSON

**The Chair:** Would Russell Christianson please come forward. Good morning, Mr Christianson, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Russell Christianson:** I'd like to thank the committee members for providing this opportunity to address you this morning. My only regret about this right now is that many of my fellow citizens, apparently numbering over 1,500, will not have the same opportunity.

I do have a bit of a love-hate relationship with this great city. I love the diversity, the food, the people, the arts and culture, the public parks, libraries, the ideas, the TTC and, most of all, the democracy of local government. I hate, or rather have a very strong dislike for, the architecture at Bay and King, the Gardiner Expressway, the air pollution, the supremacy of the automobile, the lack of good job opportunities for many talented people, the growth of food banks and the inequities inherent in our economic system.

I came to Toronto in 1982 from a small town in Alberta to take a master's degree at the University of Toronto. As a prairie boy and the son of first-generation Canadians, I am grateful for the opportunity to attend the U of T. My parents were not so fortunate. When they were young, the Great Depression was giving way to the Second World War, and they had grown up poor on homesteads in the Prairies.

My father would have made a great lawyer, but without publicly funded universities, he never had the chance. He couldn't afford to pay university tuition. Instead, he became an RCMP officer and finished his distinguished 42-year police career as the chief of police in Camrose, Alberta. My mother, an extremely talented and compassionate person, would have been a great doctor, but she couldn't afford university tuition either, and instead became a nurse.

You may be wondering, what does this very personal story have to do with Bill 103? It has to do with opportunity: the opportunity for citizens to speak their minds at this committee hearing, the opportunity for our young people to become educated and live fulfilling lives, the opportunity for all Torontonians to find and apply themselves in meaningful work, the opportunity for parents to provide nutritious food and a warm, loving home for their children, the opportunity to participate.

Bill 103 and the process through which it is being forced down our throats is repugnant. Over the past few months I have heard Mike Harris and Al Leach make comments that they will not be moved from their legislative agenda. They will not recognize the results of the upcoming referendums in the six cities which they want to become a megalopolis. They reluctantly agreed, after much public pressure, to hold these truncated committee hearings, and just before Christmas they appointed three trustees to overrule our democratically elected municipal government.

The struggle we are having here in Toronto is no different from that occurring in Belgrade, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Peru and Mexico. It is the struggle for democracy. We have a provincial government that wants to control the people and run their affairs like a corporation, and we all know who wants to be the CEO: Mike Harris.

Municipal government is the closest thing we have to true democracy in this country. Federal and provincial governments are physically, emotionally and intellectually removed from the people. Municipal governments give all of us, as citizens, the opportunity to participate, to participate actively on a day-to-day basis, not simply for the few seconds it takes to mark our ballot once every four or five years in provincial or federal elections.

I took the opportunity to participate as a citizen in one of the city of Toronto's many innovations, the Toronto Food Policy Council. As a volunteer, I attended an afternoon meeting every three weeks for four years. I worked together with other citizens, municipal councillors, business people and farmers to create visionary, long-term policies to help develop a sustainable and just food system for all the people of Toronto. Outside of the meetings, I volunteered my time to work with other citizens to launch community projects like Field to Table, the stockyards renewal and community gardens. In all, I volunteered about one day per week for four years. As a management consultant, I charge my clients in the range of \$500 to \$1,000 per day. If I had charged the city of Toronto for my professional services, it would have amounted to \$25,000 to \$50,000 per year before GST. I and many others enthusiastically volunteered our time because we wanted to make our community more livable and caring. How is our time accounted for in Bill 103?

The provincial government is running ads and talking about creating "efficient government, cutting unnecessary costs, and positioning Toronto to be globally competitive." The city of Toronto is not a private corporation with the sole objective to maximize shareholders' wealth. The city of Toronto is a community, one which is envied around the world, one towards which I feel enough commitment to donate time and energy to maintaining and improving. If Bill 103 is implemented, I will be disempowered as a citizen. This direct attack on the democratic rights of citizens is not acceptable.

The city of Toronto is a venerable local democracy. Democracy requires patience, long-term vision, citizen participation, a diversity of views and the ability to listen. In a democracy we have to maintain an open mind and heart and have the humility to realize we may not have all the answers and that we can be persuaded through discussion and experimentation to change our point of view.

#### 1000

When I look at my young children — Dagmar, three-and-a-half, and Soren, seven months old — I wonder if they'll have the opportunities for public education, meaningful work, a secure and welcoming community to live in. If our provincial government implements Bill 103, continues to cut government programs designed for the public good, privatizes important public institutions and provides an income tax cut for the wealthy while increasing property taxes, I know that my children and other children in this city will suffer.

The provincial government has been formally warned by its Speaker that it is in contempt against its own citizens with its aggressive propaganda campaign. I agree with the Speaker and I strongly encourage the Harris government to listen to perspectives other than their own and have the humility to recognize that forcing change down people's throats is offensive, undemocratic and contemptuous.

I would like to close with a short poem written by a Chinese sage 2,500 years ago, words that ring particularly true today as we approach a new millennium: "If you want to govern the people, you must place yourself below them. If you want to lead the people, you must learn how to follow them."

**The Chair:** Mr Parker, you have a minute and a half for questions.

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** Mr Christianson, thank you very much for appearing this morning. You've touched on a great number of points; we won't have a chance to canvass all of them. You open with the comment that you "love the diversity, the food, the people, the arts and culture, public parks and libraries, the ideas" and so on of the city of Toronto. In what way does Bill 103 put any of those in jeopardy, in your view?

**Mr Christianson:** It puts them in jeopardy because creativity, which creates those things, and human beings, who create those things I've mentioned, can only come out of a situation where there's an opportunity to participate. From my point of view, Bill 103 diminishes greatly the opportunity to participate as active citizens in this community.

**Mr Parker:** You comment also on the trustees. Can you describe for me just what it is the trustees are empowered to do?

**Mr Christianson:** From my understanding, the trustees have great powers, as the previous speakers have mentioned, and they won't be responsible to the citizens of this city.

**Mr Parker:** Exactly what are those powers that you object to?

**Mr Christianson:** The powers they have are, from my understanding, the financial controls over the city, the budgets and how the money of the taxpayers in this community is spent.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, we've exhausted your time. Thank you, Mr Christianson, for your presentation this morning.

**Mr Christianson:** Those questions were somewhat offensive, by the way.

#### DOUGLAS BROWNE

**The Chair:** Could I please have Douglas Browne come forward? Good morning, Mr Browne, and welcome to the committee. If there's time remaining at the end of your presentation, it will be allotted to the Liberal caucus.

**Mr Douglas Browne:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak on Bill 103. I come to speak as an individual citizen of this great city of Toronto because I am very upset with the provisions of this bill. They are a direct threat to our city and its citizens, especially when they are combined with the other bills on your agenda.

The bill creates a huge municipality of 2.5 million people, four times that of present-day Toronto, larger than many of Canada's provinces. I understand that studies have shown that other such large cities are tied up in bureaucratic knots, are unresponsive to local neighbourhood needs, give too much power to officials, are hostile to new ideas and cost more money per person to run.

The minister talks about savings from amalgamation but has not produced any adequate studies to prove that will happen. There are pious hopes expressed about lower taxes and efficient practices. Questions of the negative impact on quality of life, access to politicians and protection of neighbourhoods are swept aside by bland assurances that all will be well. Again, there is no analysis or evidence to support these claims. Instead, the existing evidence negates them.

What is so wrong with the present system? My own 33 years of experiences as a Toronto resident have been very positive. Toronto's government works, and works well. For instance, in the late 1970s and early 1980s our neighbourhood, the Annex, was given the opportunity to participate in the creation of a detailed official plan for our area by the city. The process involved setting goals and working out plans to meet those goals for each small section.

As one chair of our residents' group at that time, I helped organize numerous meetings and made many deputations at City Hall. The planners who were assigned made a great effort to understand our community's character. The city made numerous revisions as we went along. Every objection was carefully considered and all

were resolved so that no one challenged these bylaws at the Ontario Municipal Board.

My point is that this was a sophisticated and democratic and effective process. It is the kind of process that I fear will be compromised if we move to a megacity and the government of that city is further removed and isolated from local concerns. Also, our city has developed many innovative and well-thought-out policies to deal with the challenges of modern urban life and the economy. It is a world leader in many areas. All of these innovations would be in jeopardy in the huge city to be established by this bill.

Toronto citizens recognize the good job done by our local government. There has been no outcry for amalgamation — no petitions, no crowded meetings demanding such a change, no election campaigns where that is an issue, as far as I am aware, except for the Toronto board of trade, and while it has the right to speak for business interests, it has no mandate to speak for the majority of Torontonians.

In one recent referendum on the general topic, people voted to get rid of Metro and thereby increase the power and authority of the city of Toronto. I want to add a little bit about Metro. I am less enthusiastic about Metro council. I think of the fact that a project for a streetcar line down Spadina Avenue was changed into a mega-project that cost many millions of dollars and really disrupts the life of the street. This was done so the streetcars could get from Bloor Street to Front Street a few minutes faster to service the railway lands, which are still undeveloped.

Also, I'm upset about the cuts to social services that Metro has made in the last two or three years in an effort to achieve a zero tax increase. A very modest tax increase would have allowed for a much more humane approach. Also cut was the funding for our excellent reference library so that, for instance, it will have to close its doors for a period of time this year. In general, the record of Metro makes me apprehensive about giving that level all the powers, as is done in this bill.

Now, people do recognize that some changes need to be made, particularly in relation to basic services across the greater Toronto area. However, amalgamation does not deal with the task of negotiating these changes. We, the citizens of Metro Toronto, deserve the same right to participate in making decisions about our future as you have offered to our neighbouring regions. What is the emergency that says this bill must be passed now and passed quickly? Why are our neighbours treated with respect and dignity, as partners in this process, while Torontonians are treated like second-class Ontarians?

It is hard to accept that the Metro members of the government have not spoken out against this shoddy treatment. I urge you, therefore, to put this bill on the back burner and begin a real process of consultation with the councils and citizens of the affected cities and the borough of East York, plus Metro council, to explore what improvements could be made in our government structures.

**1010**

In addition, the tax and related bills should also be reconsidered, as they place an excessive burden on the

property tax, a burden that is totally unfair and one that will damage the economies of every municipality in Ontario.

While the Constitution apparently allows the Ontario government to change our boundaries without our consent, I urge you to take a more enlightened and modern view and recognize that cities have a right to be involved in determining their future. However, if the government is determined, despite opposition, to pass this bill, then at least make changes to reduce its arbitrary nature. Eliminate the sections that give oppressive, arbitrary power to appointed trustees. It would be more appropriate, I suggest, for the government to negotiate a total spending envelope for the transition budgets of the various councils with those bodies and forget the trustees.

It must be made absolutely clear also that the reserve funds must stay in Toronto. We raised these funds through our taxes. They belong to us and are not at the disposal of the trustees.

The transition teams also have far too much arbitrary power and retain that power for far too long. Their powers should be sharply limited and those powers should end completely when a new council takes control.

The team should only be able to make temporary appointments, with a definitely brief time limit, and make decisions that apply for a similarly brief time and for limited purposes that relate specifically to the needs of the transition process. The clauses that place them and the trustees above the law are completely undemocratic and autocratic and should be struck out of the bill.

Finally, I want to appeal to the government members to reconsider this bill and to work for its withdrawal in whatever way you can. But if this bill passes through the committee, that will not be the breaking point. We will continue to oppose it in the referendum campaigns, in the courts, on the steps of the Legislature, in silent protest in the galleries, in the elections to the new council, in the press wherever we can, in future referenda and certainly in the next election.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Browne. You've effectively used your 10 minutes. I want to thank you for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### ABBY BUSHBY

**The Chair:** Would Abby Bushby please come forward? Good morning. You have 10 minutes this morning to make your presentation.

**Ms Abby Bushby:** Good morning. I'm a lawyer with experience in municipal law. Currently, I'm pursuing a doctorate in urban and regional planning at the University of Waterloo. I have come here today, however, to speak as a resident of the city of Toronto. I have some remarks that are written. They're being copied now, so I can leave a copy with each of you.

Some of my comments are spoken in academic descriptions; however, I want to assure you that I speak as one who loves this city and as one who expects that all Ontarians want to see this safe, viable, compassionate, accessible and culturally interesting city continue to be the place for all to be proud of — our provincial capital.

As well, as a woman and as an active member of Women Plan Toronto, I want to tell you that it is mostly

women who worked hard to create services that benefit our community, that we believe our communities are better when people care for those in need, regardless of their place of origin, and that all residents of Ontario should share the responsibility to care.

We know that women, as a group, are more dependent on community and social services. It is women who will suffer most from their loss in doing extra volunteer work and caring for the elderly without long-term-care places. We abhor the divisiveness that will ensue when local property taxpayers will be forced to beat down local mill rates.

Reducing the costs of services will mean that the sons and daughters who didn't get all the parenting and education in their home town and come to live on the Toronto streets, the divorced sister-in-law and her children who left the suburbs because they need public transit and child care at close proximity to the schools, the uncle with the recessive gene producing chronic illness who comes to Toronto in search of necessary services — they will pay the cost of Toronto, keeping it economically competitive. This is anathema to our egalitarian values, our sense of duty to individuals in need and our long history of acting in the public good. In this sense, I believe I am speaking on behalf of people from all over Ontario.

That being said, I want to direct my comments to two things: the effects of downloading, as you might have gathered, and omissions on regional planning. I will be passing out to you as part of my submission a declaration on the rights of women against megacity and against downloading. A signing ceremony will take place on Wednesday, February 12th in Toronto city hall between 4 and 6.

What is your role? Since the urban area addressed in Bill 103 is about the present Metro Toronto, the primary question to ask is, what does the proposal do for Toronto? If it fails to be good for Toronto, then it ought to be abandoned, regardless of what Bill 103 might do for municipalities outside of Metro. At the same time, the high degree of interdependence between Toronto and its neighbours is so obvious that we could easily overlook its full meaning. In the GTA people live here, work there, study at institutions over there, attend the theatre in one community and shop everywhere.

Any proposed reforms must consider the appropriate urban area for some functions and the need for differentiation in others. Your task is to create a framework that permits local municipalities to succeed when they govern responsibly and to prevent negative impacts from the decisions of an otherwise responsible municipality from falling on to its neighbour. To do this, you must recognize that planning cannot be divorced from examining the impacts of change. What you wish for and what you get at the end of day should not be an accident.

The provincial government is in the business of creating creatures of statute. I do believe it is your fundamental duty to make strategies to manage the impacts of both growth and change. There is no such thing as letting the market dictate policy when the actions of the provincial government itself determine who gets the best deal. Furthermore, if the market, as assisted by not-so-apparent subsidies and policies, creates an underclass of poor

people concentrated in large cities, the chaos and harm will be felt by all.

Amalgamating the Metro area is to amalgamate borders that have been too small for a long time. The true urban area is the GTA. It is anomalous that hearings are under way before we know much about the Greater Toronto Services Board proposal. I regretfully understand, however, that regional land use planning is not contemplated. Hamilton-Wentworth, by contrast, attempts to amalgamate suburban and urban communities. The smaller and rural communities want protections from decision-making that destroys their way of life, and this could be provided — or could have been provided, I should say, after this morning's news — with effective regional planning.

The probable result of amalgamating Toronto will be to harden the borders between Metro and the outer suburbs and thus make any form of governance between the partners of the true urban area more difficult. This will come from the effects of downloading. I won't go into details of dollars as many deputants have pointed out the net fiscal impact of increasing municipalities' costs for income assistance, assisted housing and long-term care.

Toronto has long provided housing and basic services for many of the province's poor, elderly and disabled, for people who lost their work due to downturns in regional economies and for the nation's immigrants during their early years of dependency, which they spend in Toronto to a large degree. You know the statistics: three quarters of the GTA's social housing, 38% of the province's and a much higher proportion of persons dependent on income assistance, for 22% of the population. Torontonians will not be convinced that our responsibilities to care are greater than those of other residents of Ontario.

Why is income redistribution by local governments "wrong in principle and devastating in practice"? In recessions welfare demand will go up and so must property taxes at a time when growth must be stimulated. The board of trade is right: If you recognize the inherent weakness of downloading on to the property tax base, the emergency fund is no answer. In ordinary times demand will be higher per capita in large cities. In recessions demand will go up with no guaranteed local control, which goes against the need for certainty.

## 1020

You may try to dismiss fears that the fund will be abandoned by future provincial governments, and you may promise not to set conditions for it, such as mandatory workfare, but the Fortune 500 index will no doubt regard the dependence of welfare on the property tax base as a looming liability. Do you want to be known as the government that ruined the best letter of reference we ever had?

Tax-induced flight is predictable for the most mobile residents, businesses in search of lower required expenditures, as well as the employed, who will follow their employer out of the city. Furthermore, the practice in some GTA municipalities when a single person asks for temporary income assistance is to give a fare to Toronto. This will likely increase, not decrease.

Downloading does not permit the inherent efficiency of a large urban centre to be valued. It makes sense that

with increased densities, diversity of functions, access to resources, many users for public transit, roads and recreation centres, revenues are greater. The provincial government has long recognized the wealth produced by large cities. For example, Metro Toronto local property taxes have long relieved the province of its duty to pay for public education for one fifth of Ontario's students.

Taking all measures of wealth into account, the wealthiest city in the United States is Honolulu. It has the least expenditures per person. Why? Only there does the state pay for education, hospital services and welfare.

Downloading causes segregation of rich and poor communities. With provincial development controls dashed by Bill 20 last year, municipalities on the urban fringe with greenfield lands for development will find less of an incentive to provide affordable housing for fear of creating welfare dependencies. Until the US Supreme Court ordered New Jersey to create affordable housing in the Mount Laurel decision, local planning areas had all but divided the state into one- to four-acre lots, widely regarded as a way to keep the poor in the cities.

The result in Ontario will be chaos as older areas, including older suburbs, become the places of affordable housing by default, without community services to justify increased property taxes. Some older, inner suburbs around Chicago forbid the placement of For Sale signs on front lawns. Too many signs spark a panic as neighbours realize others are fleeing in search of newer greenfield developments with low net liabilities.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry to interrupt you, but we've just now exceeded your allotted time.

**Ms Bushby:** That's my 10 minutes? I wish I could say more.

**The Chair:** Yes. We have the rest of your presentation; all members do. I'm sure they'll give it their full consideration. Thank you for coming forward this morning and making your presentation.

## Applause.

**The Chair:** Order, please. Ladies and gentlemen, I think we've had the conversation about applause following presentations. We are on tight timetables. I'd appreciate it if you'd hold that to a minimum.

## LIN GRIST AND AARON EAST

**The Chair:** Would Lin Grist please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Lin Grist:** Thank you very much. We're speaking as a family. This is my son Aaron East. He will be speaking and making part of the presentation.

Mr Chairman, ladies and gentleman, thank you for agreeing to hear my son and me speak on the issue of the amalgamation of the city of Toronto with the other six municipal governments which currently constitute Metropolitan Toronto. My name is Lin Grist and this is my younger son, Aaron East. Our family has lived in the city of Toronto for the past 22 years. I am an immigrant, Canadian by choice, and I'm proud that I have had the luxury and the good fortune to raise my family in a country and in a province which has as its base a value system that is democratic and believes in justice and fairness for all.

There are some aspects of this bill which make sense to us. It seems reasonable to amalgamate services among the six municipalities. This is already the case for such services as police, ambulances and transit, and there are other services which could likely find efficiencies through amalgamation, such as fire departments and garbage. Those sorts of services that need to be uniform for everyone across Metro should be amalgamated. It will be more efficient and allow us to spend those taxes on other important aspects of our community life.

Now let me talk a little bit about why I don't want to be part of a city that is in excess of 2.6 million people, with only 44 elected representatives to make all the decisions on behalf of the citizenry.

We live in what is now ward 10 of the city of Toronto. It is also known as the Beaches, a very close-knit and caring community on the lake. I believe that property taxes will rise, both residential and commercial. The problem with property taxes is that they're not progressive. Everyone pays the same, regardless of their income. That will be a huge problem for many seniors who live in our community. They may own their own homes after a life of work, but they are cash poor. Huge tax increases could force them to sell their homes in the autumn of their lives.

**Mr Aaron East:** There will be fewer elected local representatives for our community, the ones who make all the important decisions on our behalf, many fewer than in the rest of Ontario, and that's not really fair. I have a friend who lives in a little town in southern Ontario with less than 2,000 people and they have a mayor. I don't mind 640,000, but one mayor for 2.6 million people is a bit much.

The city of Toronto has many wonderful community events, especially for families and young people. Every New Year there's a rock concert at city hall. I went to it. That will be a thing of the past in a megacity. When did Metro ever put on a local event, especially for young people? Local community events simply can't be organized by big bureaucracies.

**Ms Grist:** Hundreds of local volunteers work in groups and organizations jointly funded by the city of Toronto and the local community: everything from Share a Christmas to the Beaches Jazz Festival and canoe races across the lake for paraplegics. I and many like me volunteer because it's our community and it makes us feel like we belong. We can see our dollars at work. It's very hard to feel like you belong in a huge conglomerate of 2.6 million people.

I also want to talk a little bit about this exchange of costs between the province and the municipalities. Welfare will be a big bill for Metro, a bill that will be shouldered by the people of Metro, not based on their ability to pay, as in the case of every other industrial democracy. If there is another recession, it could cripple us. If you will recall, in the last recession welfare costs went up by more than \$1 billion in one year.

It's not just the welfare. There is the cost of social housing and new health care costs: public health, nursing homes, homes for the aged and community-based or home care. The problem with health costs is that as we speak the province is downsizing and closing hospitals.

Believe me, I am in favour of health care reform — that's not the issue — but the cost of nursing homes and home care is going to be even higher as there are fewer hospital beds available and an aging population. We used to pay for health care on our ability to pay, not where we lived. I don't think this is what Justice Emmett Hall envisaged when he redesigned the health care system in Ontario in 1966.

**Mr East:** The new bill envisages keeping our elected officials in office but taking away their powers as elected officials and giving them to a group of people who, while they may be well-intentioned and have the public good at heart, are not the people that we chose to govern us at the local level. Does this mean you will be replacing people we elected with unelected officials without asking us?

**Ms Grist:** What will the future of this city be? We have lots of examples just south of the border on what not to do, and right next door in Quebec we have Montreal, once a vibrant city, which has had its heart taken out of it. It's full of À vendre — For Sale — and À louer — For Lease — signs. Do we really want that?

How, when there are 2.6 million people in the community, will we maintain this caring community we have now? We have a world-wide reputation for being the most livable city on earth. It's safe, it's clean, it has opportunities for business, it has good housing for families, great recreation, cultural opportunities: a city that is the envy of the world. Why do we want to dismantle it?

#### 1030

We already know what happens to cities that have the caring taken out of them. They have more crime, more homelessness, community tensions, people who have no stake in their community and no civic pride.

This is not the kind of future I want for me, and more specifically, this is not the kind of future I want for my son, which is why he is here with me today. The future is his, ladies and gentlemen. Please, please, do not take it from him. Thank you.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much, both of you, for coming. I guess one of the first things this government said when it announced the megacity was, "This megacity will make it easier for us to be globally competitive and will make it easier for us to win the bid for the next Olympic Games." Don't you think that is a laudable goal? In other words, wouldn't the Olympics be of great benefit to you and your community?

**Ms Grist:** As a matter of fact, Mr Colle, I don't have any problem with getting the Olympics. I think it might be a good idea for us. I don't know enough about it to comment on it in detail. I think that anything that brings to this wonderful city, as it is now, new business and new opportunities would be absolutely wonderful, but not at the cost of our local communities and what we have now. By all means, do things to add to what we have. Let's make ourselves even better. Just because we're the best in the world now doesn't mean to say that we can't be even better, but we have to build on what we have, not destroy and dismantle what we have now and start again.

**Mr Colle:** I guess the government is saying that in order to protect and to make it better, you have to

undertake this massive change because things are so bad, basically, in Metro that you need this radical surgery.

**Ms Grist:** I must have missed something, Mr Colle. I live in a community that is not so bad. It's a vibrant community; it's a caring community. There are communities like the Beaches all over Metro. I don't know Scarborough or Etobicoke very well. I do know where I live very well, and I think they're worth saving. What happens is, people have civic pride in communities where they feel like they can belong. It's really hard to belong when it's absolutely huge and bland.

People live in places because that's where they want to live. Some people like to live by the lake, some people like to live downtown, some people like to live in the suburbs because they want to have huge backyards. Other people like to live in the city because they want to be close to each other. There's all kinds of people doing all kinds of different things. All I'm saying is, just allow us the opportunity to continue doing that. We've done it very well for 30 years, thank you very much. We would really like to continue doing that. We didn't ask you to change anything. If you do want to change stuff, please ask us. Don't just do it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Grist and Aaron, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

**Ms Grist:** You're welcome. Thank you for hearing us.

### CARLOS TORCHIA

**The Chair:** Would Carlos Torchia please come forward. Good morning, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Carlos Torchia:** Thank you very much. Mr Chairman. My name is Carlos Torchia and I have been a citizen of this city for many years. Thank you for allowing me to assert my civil right, publicly expressing my opinion about Bill 103 that attempts to amalgamate the municipalities of Metro Toronto.

First of all, I would like to mention that I come from a small country called Chile. There, starting in 1973, I witnessed the removal of the democratically elected mayors by Pinochet's illegal military junta. That junta replaced elected officials with designated ones. What followed was the territorial partition of the municipalities, or the creation of new ones, without consulting the people, only using arbitrary means. In a short time, communal structures and identities, neighbourhood boundaries that had been evolving for hundreds of years, suddenly changed dramatically, affecting people's lives both materially and psychologically. All of this was done in conjunction with the privatization of education, the health care system, the pension plan and the crown corporations in a sort of "shock therapy."

So here I am, 25 years later, facing the same threats. I am facing the radical breakup of Metropolitan Toronto municipalities, facing the disappearance of my old city of Toronto under the dispositions of Bill 103. Of course, one can establish an important difference between my Chilean experience and this one. Here the bill will have to go through parliamentarian discussion, and we know that Pinochet abolished the Parliament. But indeed, in my opinion, there are some authoritarian features that worry me about Bill 103.

For instance, before the approval or rejection of Bill 103 by the Parliament, the provincial government has appointed trustees to overrule the authority of our mayors and councillors. For me this is an authoritarian measure, and more authoritarian it is that it should abolish with a single blow the authority of my mayor and my local democratic council, the ones that I had voted for to govern my city for a three-year term.

In my view, as a citizen I have the right to see my local government finish its legal term. In my view, Bill 103 violates my democratic right by suppressing my local representatives without consulting me. With the proposed megacity, I will feel more distant from the decision-making process, and I believe that designated trustees hijack the capacities that I have given to my mayor and municipal council. Also, I suspect that my quality of life will decrease because the proposed mega-council will have to address the problems of 2.3 million citizens, a gigantic distant government that hardly could be called local. I do not want to see the boundaries changed in my old Toronto without being given the information backing the advantages of doing so. I do not want to lose my identity as a local citizen.

I am firmly convinced that any major decision affecting citizens' lives or any major restructuring of public institutions can only be carried out after a truly genuine and deep process of consultation. For me it is an authoritarian feature that the government introduced Bill 103 to discussion before calling a referendum on the matter, before knowing people's feelings and hearing the people's voice. Clearly this public hearing is only a step in public consultation and is therefore not enough. It is an expression of democracy, but a narrow one. To impose a drastic agenda without an informed referendum will polarize our cities and will fail to build the necessary consensus we need to enhance our institutions.

Besides all of this, I have learned that until now nobody has been able to demonstrate that the amalgamation of the metropolitan municipalities would save a significant amount of money. I have learned that in other Canadian experiences, the cost of amalgamated cities exceeds that of the independent cities before amalgamation.

So what is the rationale behind this project? Why have I to agree to lose my mayor, my local government, my local identity by saying yes to a proposal that fails to provide enough objective arguments proving that in fact amalgamation will enhance my quality of life? I am an urbanite and I love my compact, dense, culturally alive and multi-ethnic neighbourhood in old Toronto. I respect other styles of life, but I doubt suburban styles of low density, such as those in Scarborough, North York and Etobicoke, will mesh well with Toronto's. Urban and social evolution have led us to have different municipalities. Why have I to see mine disappear under the pretext of unknown advantages? If amalgamation will save little or no money at all, then let's not.

I conclude that there will be a risk of deterioration in local programs: less policemen on the street, more time waiting for firefighters, deterioration of our parks, snow clearing, support for local culture, recreational programs for our children etc.

1040

I am worried about what will happen with finances in the proposed megacity. The provincial government has announced that it will download on to the new municipality the cost of social programs, such as 50% of welfare, family support, homes for the elderly, subsidies for TTC and GO trains etc. So I am afraid that property taxes will necessarily increase, and of course rent will increase too. I do not want people moving out of this beautiful city, and I do not want myself and my family to be forced out either.

I am afraid that Bill 103 is the preamble for privatization of services like water, sewage and waste. A megacity with such a load of responsibilities will not be able to maintain present levels of services to the people without raising taxes or reducing these programs. In my view, the amalgamation Bill 103 will pave the road for services privatization, as Bill 104 will pave the road to school privatization.

I do not deny that the provincial government was elected with a majority in a democratic process. But I don't believe that the democratic process finished at that moment, nor do I believe that this government was elected to impose amalgamation on the cities of Metropolitan Toronto. Democracy is a daily exercise. I insist, when a major restructuring is planned, drastically affecting people's lives, the government must organize a wide and deep consultation process to ensure that a vast quantity of the citizens can express their opinion and concerns regardless of whether the government has an absolute majority in the House or not.

I am a democrat and I am willing to listen to what my fellow Torontonian citizens think about Bill 103. I will accept any verdict that they express. The same should be the position of the provincial government. In my opinion, the provincial government should not use its majority in the House to pass Bill 103 without considering the results of the municipal referendum ending on March 3. If the results are against the proposal, the government has the moral duty to accept the people's verdict. This is what democracy is all about in my opinion. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Mr Silipo, you have just a quick minute.

**Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt):** Mr Torchia, I just have a very short time to thank you for the presentation and would just want to ask you this: Do you think the referendum is the vehicle that the government could use, if it chose to listen finally to the people on this, to say, "This is what we wanted to do, but the people have said differently," assuming that the referendum decision is against the megacity, "and therefore we'll do what people like you and others have been saying," which is to sit and talk about what the alternatives are?

**Mr Torchia:** My view is that in any major restructuring of the society, you have to have a referendum. In any major decision affecting drastically people's lives — it doesn't matter that the matter wasn't in the program that the government exposed to the people at the time of the election. But after that, if you are going to propose a major restructuring of such a life, you have to ask the people what is their opinion. That is my point of view.

That is applied not only for me to the provincial government, but also the federal government.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Torchia, for coming forward this morning.

### MELISSA McCLELLAN

**The Chair:** Would Melissa McClellan please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Melissa McClellan:** Mr Chairman and committee members, I would like to thank the committee for giving me this time to speak on Bill 103. I have lived in Toronto for almost half of my life. I moved here to attend university and fell in love with the city so much that I decided to make it my home.

I speak to you today as a concerned citizen who is frightened of the effects of Bill 103 upon the city I love. What concerns me most about the City of Toronto Act is the loss of our quality of life, loss of democracy, and the speed with which these changes are being made without consideration of the implications.

As I understand it, amalgamation is supposed to save money and improve efficiency. This implies that a city's health is simply the bottom line on a financial balance statement. I suggest to you that a city is far more than this. It is a living body consisting of people and neighbourhoods as well as roads, sewers and buildings. Its character is defined by the services it offers, how it helps the disadvantaged, its bylaws, its programs and policies, the kinds of municipal politicians it elects, its planning zones, its parks and its libraries.

The city of Toronto is known around the world as a city that works, a good place to live and a good place to visit. I see no evidence that the city of Toronto is terminally ill and in need of radical surgery. I hope you will consider, before passing this bill, that the physical part of Toronto may survive but the soul will be killed in the process.

I am concerned by the extreme risk the government is willing to take on the chance that amalgamation may save money. What price will we pay for this gamble? How many jobs will be lost? How many services will be cut? How much disruption will we suffer while the changes takes place? What price do you put on the loss of representation? How will you reconcile the needs of the urban and the suburban area? Which area will lose out?

Each municipality is unique and the bylaws, programs and policies reflect that. To just promise that it will be more efficient does not answer people's concerns of how it will affect their community. How much damage will be inflicted in order to save money and improve inefficiencies when these things could be accomplished without amalgamation?

Even the chief author of the KPMG report, Fresh Start, said, "There has been no amalgamation of which I am aware in the current fiscal environment that would demonstrate the certainty of savings in Metro Toronto." Since cost savings and efficiencies do not seem to hold up to scrutiny, one is left to conclude that there must be other motivations for this act.

I fear that with amalgamation the quality of life of Toronto will decrease. I value Toronto's strong anti-

smoking laws, environment policies, bike lanes and paths, support of the arts and recreation programs that are available regardless of your ability to pay. I value the services that Toronto provides to its citizens whether you're rich or poor. In Toronto a child can take swimming lessons or go for a swim on a hot day even if her parents cannot afford to pay. I wonder what the kids denied recreation services after amalgamation will do? Will kids have to pay user fees to take a book out of the library?

I am aware that municipalities control only 28% of the total budget; 28% per cent does not sound like much, but it is in fact millions of dollars, and that 28% is what pays for the services that make our municipalities unique. I am concerned about what the long-term effects of this legislation will be on the quality of life in Toronto.

Many studies have been done on restructuring Metropolitan Toronto. The Honourable John P. Robarts, at the end of the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Toronto, said:

"The conclusion is that amalgamation would decrease the sensitivity of the entire system to issues and concerns of a very local nature. Since there are no strong arguments for administrative savings to be realized from such a move, the commission has decided to discard the amalgamation option."

The Golden report recommended the elimination of all the regional governments in the GTA and the establishment of a GTA regional government, but keeping strong local governments for the individual cities. The Metro regional government voted in favour of abolishing themselves in favour of a GTA regional government. The citizens of Toronto voted in favour of abolishing the Metro regional government in the last municipal election. Bill 103 ignores all these studies and the desire of the people of Toronto.

With the new megacity I fear that we will be taking government further away from ordinary people like myself and making it more accessible to the special interest groups like developers, speculators and those with the money to be heard. The rest of us will get voice mail. My voice will be diluted. Instead of being one of 620,000, it will be one of 2.3 million.

I trust and have faith in my local councillor and mayor. I am insulted that you feel trustees must be appointed to watch their every move when they have done nothing wrong. By showing contempt for my local councillor you show contempt for me, because I voted for him. I would trust elected councillors far more than I would trust appointed, unaccountable and inaccessible trustees and transition team members who report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs rather than the citizens of the affected cities. I think democracy works best the closer it is to the people, a statement the Premier often makes when he suggests that federal powers should be transferred to the provincial level.

#### 1050

In the past in Ontario change has occurred by evolution, not by revolution. The last municipal changes in Metro occurred over several years. Change may have been slow but it occurred with ample time for debate and with attention to individual hardship and social disruption. To me this is the Ontario way, the Canadian way.

Revolutions are frightening. They represent sudden violent changes in which victims get hurt. In the American Revolution my ancestors and other Loyalists were driven out of the country. In the French Revolution the victims went to the guillotine. In the Russian Revolution many were shot or exiled. The language of revolution always leads to excesses. Are the victims of the Common Sense Revolution to be local democracy and the people of Toronto? Revolutions can also trigger counter-revolutions and civil unrest.

I implore you to pull back from this revolutionary path that is foreign to this province and has caused widespread anxiety and fear. Slow down and go back to the pattern of gradual change that has served us well in the past and has been embraced by all political parties.

Let the people examine the issues closely. Give us proof rather than promises. Let the public see some plans of how bylaws and service levels would be affected in advance, not after the fact. Why should the Minister of Municipal Affairs be running the city? Was he elected to do so? I realize that democracy costs more, but it is worth it. Without it you have dictatorship, much more cost-efficient but very unaccountable, very unresponsive to the desires of the people and often acting not for the good of all people but for the good of a few.

I want a local government that cares about the needs of its citizens, about their health and their welfare. I have that government in the city of Toronto. You offer a megacity whose whole reason for being is to save money. You will impose on the citizens of Metro Toronto a megacity that will be less accountable than what we have now. You offer unelected neighbourhood committees, 44 councillors and one mayor for 2.3 million people and an unelected GTA services board. You also offer us unelected trustees and an unelected transition team. That's an awful lot of unelected people running the city — not very accountable or democratic.

A megacity government will not even have the ability to care because this legislation will allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the transition team to control the spending of our property taxes.

I implore you to slow down, to reconsider, to listen to the people. The people who have spoken and will speak come from all three political parties. They are well-off, they're middle class and they're poor. There have been professors, engineers, urban planners, architects, doctors, artists, elected councillors, parents and other concerned citizens. There have been people of all different age groups and from all six municipalities.

People are very worried about the future of their cities. Please listen to us. Do not impose your dictatorial will upon 2.3 million people. Let the people decide how we wish to be governed. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Melissa. You've effectively used your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward this morning.

RUTH CROXFORD

**The Chair:** Would Ruth Croxford please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Ruth Croxford:** I will speak against Bill 103, against the amalgamation of the Metro Toronto cities and borough into a single city. But more important to me than speaking against amalgamation, I will ask for a provincial government that listens to the people who live in Toronto, in these cities, in this borough. If the majority of the voters are in favour of the megacity, I will hold my nose and go along.

More important to me than speaking out against amalgamation is speaking out against the way this bill goes about it. Amalgamation must not be done in isolation from the greater Toronto area. The imposition of first the trustees and then the transition team is undemocratic and immoral. The time allocated to discuss, change and vote on this bill is not sufficient to get it anywhere near right.

I'll start by explaining why I disagree with the amalgamation of the existing governments.

I live in the city of Toronto. My city works a certain way. It does things a certain way. Sometimes it cooperates with its neighbours to provide a service, a police force, a transit system, sometimes it goes its own way with basement apartments, businesses operating out of homes, parks, its own health department — different concerns, different priorities, different ideas about how to serve its inhabitants best. Perhaps there are more ways it can share with its neighbours.

Perhaps there are ways in which it can reach out beyond the borders of Metro to work with the region. If so, we can talk about them, but I still live in my city. Some of its concerns are different and some of its opinions are different from those of the other cities and borough. I do not want people in other cities telling me how to live in my city. In return, I do not want to tell them how to live in theirs.

Six cities, six mayors, six councils: six times as many ideas, six times as many ways of tackling problems. Etobicoke can learn from our mistakes and we can follow York's good examples. If something is important to the city of Toronto and not to Scarborough, we can direct our energies and our tax money there and they can direct theirs elsewhere.

Every study, every expert says that amalgamation will cost money, not save it. Our cities are already too large. They are past the point where amalgamation will provide economies of scale and at the point where it will cause diseconomies of size.

Efficiency, even if an amalgamated city could provide it, is not really a good or desirable goal. It is very efficient to bulldoze down all the trees before building a housing development. It is very ugly and it is very sad.

Redundancy is not always a bad thing. Computer installations and jets build redundancy in on purpose. It is a requirement of good design. We promote reading, we promote travel as ways of finding out how other people do things. Universities ask their graduate students to study at more than one university to make sure they will be exposed to different ways of thinking and to new ideas. We can learn from what others do right, from what they do wrong, from what they do differently. Having several cities is good, not bad.

In less than a month the citizens of Toronto will tell the province whether or not they favour amalgamation. If the majority of votes favour amalgamation I will be sad, just as I was sad when the Tories formed this government, but I will accept the vote just as I accepted the fact that the Tories form the current government. But I will not accept the way this bill brings about amalgamation.

First of all I do not want unelected trustees overseeing this city. I do not want this city run by three people who report only to a minister of the provincial government. When I voted in the last provincial election, I don't recall any mention of ice rinks and swimming pools, libraries, firemen or ambulance drivers. I did not vote for my MPP to collect my garbage and clean my streets. I do not believe that Al Leach has the time to deal with all of these things, not thoughtfully, not carefully.

The proposed bill forces the trustees to work in secret. This is wrong. We are paying their salaries and must live with their decisions. Why do we have no say in who they are? Why can't they talk to us? Why can't we know? Weren't accessibility and accountability two of the words we were taught to think about when we thought of local government?

1100

Secondly, I do not want fewer politicians. I might wish for better ones, but I do not wish for fewer. Fewer politicians does not mean that only the best will run; it means that only the wealthiest and the best-connected will run.

During the last school board elections, a woman came to our house. She explained the issues which had made her decide to run for the school board. I told her what I thought and she gave me a flyer with her name on it. If the number of politicians is cut, this woman and people like her may no longer have the option of deciding to run for local government. She certainly will no longer be able to campaign on the basis of some flyers and a good pair of walking shoes. Certainly she will never meet face to face with each one of her potential constituents and encourage them to talk to her. Her ideas may be wonderful, compelling and new, or mediocre, or terrible, but the cost of running for office becomes too high and we will never know.

What do our city and Metro councillors do with their time? They spend much of it talking and writing to us. If we don't like the traffic patterns on our streets, if there's not enough parking, if the outdoor patio of the local restaurant is too noisy, we talk to our councillor. Does the boardwalk need repairs, should there be more lifeguards on the beach, fewer street vendors, quieter festivals? We talk to our councillors. They spend much of their time listening to the concerns, serious and petty, of their constituents, of us.

Fewer local councillors means larger ridings. It means the cost of running for local office is prohibitive to anyone who is not wealthy or well-connected. Fewer local politicians means they will no longer know the streets, businesses, parks and people of the area they represent. They won't have the time to listen to us, they won't have the time to talk to us, let us know what is happening, ask for our input. I think they will become isolated from us.

Finally, the studies which have been done said that the future shape of Metro must not be considered in isolation, but rather only in conjunction with the shape of the greater Toronto area. If the Harris government believes that the conclusions of the Golden report were wrong, it should explain to us why this is so. If the government chooses to ignore the Crombie report, at least the parts it didn't like, it should explain why. What information does the Harris government have that these committees did not have? Where did the studies go wrong in their logic? Why are their findings being perverted or ignored?

In sum, this amalgamation is wrong. We should be allowed to keep our cities, with their distinct characteristics, unique neighbourhoods, their different needs and priorities and their similar and different ways of doing things. If we are to give up our cities, we need to know why, we need to know how. You need to talk to us and you need to listen to us.

An amalgamation will cost money, not save it. In addition to the enormous cost of imposing amalgamation, there will be serious diseconomies of scale.

Regardless of whether our cities do or do not amalgamate, their futures should not be considered independently of the shape of the greater Toronto area. If it is, the people of this province deserve to be told where Anne Golden and David Crombie went wrong.

Decreasing the number of politicians is a mistake. It comes at a cost of placing local government out of the reach of too many. It comes at a cost of moving local government too far away from the people it serves.

**The Vice-Chair:** I must warn you that you're almost out of time. You have about 20 seconds left.

**Ms Croxford:** It upsets me very much to be here. I had the idea that it was enough, somehow, to read about the issues, vote intelligently and write to my councillor or MPP or MP about things I felt strongly about. Putting an election sign in my window was a bold thing for me. It did not occur to me, in this country, that a government would refuse to listen to its people.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing before us today.

I would like to call upon B.D. Jolly. Looking for B.D. Jolly.

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and The Islands):** If Mr Jolly is not here, could we not hear the end of this presentation?

**The Vice-Chair:** No. I'm sorry.

#### MICHAEL CREAL

**The Vice-Chair:** We're going to move on to Michael Creal. Good morning, Mr Creal, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Michael Creal:** Thank you very much. I have four points of concern to register and I will put them very briefly.

The first is the question of process. As a resident of Toronto and a taxpayer in Toronto for the past several decades, I find it grossly insulting that a government at Queen's Park should make decisions about my local government without consulting me and my fellow citizens before introducing legislation. This is a subversion of

democratic process — there is no other term — and I resent it. I appreciate very much the opportunity to say some words before the committee this morning, but since the minister seems to have made it clear in his public statements that his mind is already made up on the matter of amalgamation, it would seem that this may be little more than a matter of ritual. I hope I'm wrong.

The second concern is the question of trusteeship. It's my understanding, and this has been mentioned by several previous speakers, that the financial management of the city of Toronto is no longer in the hands of a duly elected council but in the hands of a board of trustees not accountable to the citizens of Toronto. Similar powers, I understand, will be in the hands of a transition team once a new council is elected. I find this an extraordinary and unacceptable transfer of power from elected representatives to an appointed body.

The third concern is the question of the megacity. I have not seen one piece of hard evidence that amalgamation will save money. I have only heard promises couched in abstractions. The evidence to the contrary from studies done in other jurisdictions seems overwhelming. As for participation in civic life, participation is essential to the health of any democracy, the larger the system the lower the rate of participation. It's particularly ironic, I think, that a conservative commentator like the *Globe and Mail's* Terence Corcoran should wonder why Ontario's Conservatives, who regard themselves as the sworn foes of big government, should be introducing legislation that actually imposes big government.

On a modest scale, I have been active in virtually every city election since I came to Toronto. I've made a point of getting to know most of my local councillors over that period of time. I've worked on a range of local issues including the Spadina Expressway, the city of Toronto plan, the creation of a local park, the need for a local traffic light, that sort of thing. It has not been my experience that government at this level is not working. I think it's working very well, as a number of my predecessors speaking this morning have indicated. The problem doesn't lie in this area. The real problem is to achieve effective coordination of planning and services in the greater Toronto area.

#### 1110

For those members of the committee who think that I and others who have spoken are simply against change, let it be clear that is not the case. The area that cries out for attention is regional coordination. In short, if megacity is the answer, what is the question? Megacity doesn't save money, it doesn't bring government closer to the people, it doesn't seriously address coordination problems in the GTA. What question does it answer?

Finally, there is the downloading of financial responsibility for welfare services, and I use "welfare" as a kind of umbrella term there. The committee must have heard an earful on this because everyone from a local social worker to the Toronto board of trade regards this proposal as catastrophic in its implications. It would have a deadly impact not only on Toronto, but ultimately the whole region and the entire province would suffer because Toronto is part of the engine that keeps Ontario going. This proposal must be radically altered. It is such

a wrongheaded idea that surely the most trusting and naïve citizen of this province would have occasion to wonder if the government really knows what it's doing.

To repeat my four points of concern: the question of process — badly flawed and anti-democratic; the question of trusteeship — accountability down the drain; the question of megacity itself — big is not beautiful or cheap and coordination of services in the GTA is not effectively addressed; and the question of downloading financial responsibility for social programs — a formula for devastating the city.

**Mr Parker:** Thank you very much. I want to address your third point. I just want to note, to begin with, that in introducing this legislation to amalgamate the cities within Metro Toronto the minister also mentioned that the new model would include community councils, which would be clusters of councillors within the new city to address purely local matters, and at the same time he announced the formation of the Greater Toronto Services Board to coordinate matters across the greater Toronto area. I recognize that that's not sufficient to satisfy you, but I wonder if you could help us out with your ideas as to what you think would be a better plan to proceed with.

**Mr Creal:** My problem with that is it seems to me that it is attempting to invent solutions to problems when the solutions are already present. You're quite right that I don't really see the point of dismantling processes that have been established historically for a long period of time that are working, I think, extremely well and then trying to invent new jurisdictions to address the kinds of community input problems that are now no longer going to be dealt with. I just see that as very costly and disruptive and I don't really see it as a very effective way of addressing the problem.

**Mr Parker:** You mentioned the need for greater coordination across the greater Toronto area. Can you give us your thoughts on how to achieve that?

**Mr Creal:** Let me just give one example, and I think this is a kind of paradigm example or something: transportation. It has been for ages an issue that people have been saying, "We have got to address this." Many of you perhaps, or some of you, have been in the city of Munich. Munich has an incredibly well-integrated public transportation system. It fans out from the centre of the city and goes for 30 to 40 miles around and it is just a model of the kind of thing — we have been fussing about this as an issue for a long, long time. It is time, really, that it got addressed. It's in the long-term welfare of the whole area that this be effectively addressed. That's one cardinal example, and there are others.

**Mr Parker:** Do you see the Greater Toronto Services Board as a means of addressing that?

**Mr Creal:** I would think it would have to a body that has some real mandate to act and some real power to act. I'm just very worried that the maintenance of the existing regional areas will not produce the kind of pressure that will deliver that kind of coordinated service.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale):** Mr Creal, you maintain that Munich is an excellent example of seamless transportation. Then it must have numerous municipalities around it similar to Metro Toronto because you have stated that a new, unified city is no answer to

transportation coordination. Then how, in the existing frame of things, does the status quo achieve the coordination that you seek? There is hardly any coordination between the Mississauga, Vaughan, Pickering and all the transits around. Folks in those cities can't get on those transits, so how does the existing status quo satisfy the coordination issue in public transit?

**Mr Creal:** I haven't proposed that we have the existing status quo.

**Mr Hastings:** That's what I see and hear.

**Mr Creal:** I think there is a need for an instrument that does effective coordination in the greater Toronto area. It doesn't exist now. I agree with you.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** If I can deal very briefly with your first point of concern, I'd just like to draw to your attention May 1994, Mr Creal, when we introduced the Common Sense Revolution. Pages 12 and 13 very specifically said we would look for and expect the same kind of reductions at the municipal level that we ourselves were committed to delivering provincially.

That went further. The NDP government had commissioned Ms Golden and that report was forthcoming. In fact, last spring every mayor from the GTA, including all the mayors in Toronto, was invited down here, and I can recall my colleagues and I spent every Saturday for months talking about this issue. Those mayors knew full well what the end of the game was.

On May 31, Mr Crombie was picked. His deadline was well known. To suggest that this process hasn't been ongoing since May 1994 is not quite accurate, and particularly from the perspective of the mayors. They knew that we were moving towards municipal reform for over two years now.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

DON WEITZ

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Mr Don Weitz, please.

**Mr Gerretsen:** On a point of order, Madam Chair: It seemed to me that the presentation and questioning that took place of those particular individuals lasted a good 13 minutes, and the individual right before that — I was timing it on my own watch — was given less than 10 minutes.

**The Vice-Chair:** No, I'm sorry; it was 10:18 on the stopwatch.

**Mr Gerretsen:** Well, I beg to differ.

**The Vice-Chair:** Welcome, Mr Weitz and —

**Mr Gerretsen:** — equally long in material and yet the time —

**The Vice-Chair:** Order. Mr Weitz, welcome to the committee.

**Mr Don Weitz:** Thank you very much. I would have much preferred to give my presentation at new city hall, which I relate to much easier and more humanly than this place, so that's a question of accessibility and identity, which this government doesn't seem to respect much.

Anyway, I am a citizen of Canada, a proud psychiatric survivor, an anti-psychiatry activist, a freelance writer and human rights advocate. I've lived in Toronto for almost 35 years since emigrating from the United States

in 1962 during the Cuban missile crisis. I came to Toronto not only to continue graduate study in psychology, which parenthetically I should say was one of the biggest mistakes of my life, because of the brainwashing that's going on in academia, but more importantly to escape the massive human rights violations and racist policies of the American government at home and abroad, its witch-hunting, Gestapo, smear tactics during the McCarthyism era, and the repressive, anti-democratic actions carried out by the FBI and CIA against black and aboriginal people, civil rights leaders and other political dissidents during the Cold War and Vietnam War years in the 1950s and 1960s.

I never felt at home or respected in America, certainly not after being falsely labelled and stigmatized schizophrenic and incarcerated for over one year and forcibly treated and terrorized with over 50 subcoma insulin shocks in a Massachusetts psychiatric institution in the early 1950s. I survived this psychiatric oppression, a deeply traumatic and disempowering experience which helped radicalize me and made me more sensitive to other forms of oppression and tyranny such as Fascism.

In Toronto I often feel, and still feel, at home and feel a real sense of belonging, community, caring and sharing, recognition and empowerment which I had never experienced in American cities, such as Cleveland and Boston, where I once lived. Toronto has been home and family and very special for me, as it has been for millions of other citizens.

## 1120

But not now, because that special sense of belonging, community, caring and sharing and proud identity is being threatened, thanks to Bill 103 and other anti-democratic legislation, anti-people government policies and the arrogant posturing and lies of Mike Harris, Al Leach and their progressively regressive Tory gang.

If enacted into law, Bill 103 will force — I underline, as you can see, the word “force” — six distinct city governments, many regions and numerous communities and neighbourhoods into one sprawling, superexpensive, superbureaucratic, superchaotic and superungovernable monstrosity called a megalopolis or megacity. Many relevant studies previously cited by various researchers and critics, including Toronto Mayor Barbara Hall, all show that a megacity means mega-expenses, mega-taxes, mega-losses, mega-problems.

Bill 103 is a recipe for more Tory élitism, dictatorship and civic disaster. For example, section 9 authorizes “a board of trustees consisting of one or more members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council” for the alleged purpose of monitoring or overseeing — please read or substitute the words “manipulating” and “infiltrating” — all the current city governments during the transition year. In other words, it’s very possible for only one unelected person, perhaps another arrogant, fat cat Tory or Bay Street CEO, to rule over 2.3 million citizens in greater Toronto and overrule any decision of any elected municipal council and any local board of education or health.

Further, according to section 12, not one of its rulings or decisions can be appealed: “The decisions of the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed or ques-

tioned by a court.” Also, many of the board’s hearings, deliberations or consultations will probably be held in secret because the board is not bound by the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, which mandates open and public hearings and right of appeal and applies to all government committees and public tribunals, including government-appointed boards of trustees.

This corporate-driven agenda, coup and dictatorship, hiding behind the Harris euphemism of “Common Sense Revolution,” is not about common sense. It’s not about revolution. It’s not about amalgamation. It’s not about cutting costs. It’s not about reducing bureaucratic inefficiency and duplication or about restructuring. It’s really about the death of democracy and the cancerous growth of privatization, corporate greed and corporate takeover of government in Toronto and Ontario. This is what happens in totalitarian states such as Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany and Milosevic’s Greater Serbia.

In an outstanding public lecture last year at the University of Toronto, the brilliant social critic and political scientist Michael Parenti warned us of the current Fascist threat in western capitalist countries like the United States and Canada. Parenti pointed out that today’s Fascism is masquerading as the global corporate economy and that this new Fascism needs the support of the big private corporations to survive and thrive, just as the old Fascism did in the 1930s and 1940s.

Unfortunately, thanks to Mike Harris and his gang, the Fascist threat is real and growing right now in Toronto and Ontario. Wake up, citizens. The Harris government’s proposed dumping of all financial responsibility for housing, welfare, family benefits and social services on to the limited budgets of Toronto and the other five municipalities in Metro is also very threatening and worrisome. It’s another massive copout, a shocking lack of social and political responsibility, another betrayal of the people by the Harris neo-Fascist government.

In Toronto, these are a few of the more obvious and probable consequences of the Harris government’s callous and cowardly anti-social, anti-democratic policies of contempt, neglect and indifference towards the most vulnerable among us: a dangerous escalation of the already alarming housing shortage crisis; a zero apartment vacancy rate in Toronto; longer waiting lists for non-profit and co-op housing, which now average 3 years, thanks to Harris’s massive cuts and elimination of all low-cost, affordable housing; more overcrowded, filthy, disease-ridden shelters; thousands of more homeless people; more deaths on the street — by the way, approximately 15 homeless men died last year on Toronto’s mean and cold streets, two this year so far; higher rates of TB; more poor and hungry children; more poverty; more misery; more suffering for thousands of sole-support mothers and other low-income parents; more sub-standard housing; non-existent welfare and deadend jobs for thousands of homeless, deinstitutionalized psychiatric people barely surviving on the street, stoned on overdoses of poisonous psychiatric drugs — “medication” — handed out like candy by pill-pushing psychiatrists and forced to survive in rooming houses run down by absentee landlords and group homes, firetraps and poorly supervised homes for special neglect — so-called homes

for special care — where people are dying from safe, effective and lifesaving "treatment"; and more massive cuts to hospital budgets resulting in more layoffs or firings of nurses and other staff, hospital bed and ward closings, mindless mergers of hospitals, and threats to home care, long-term care facilities, and the quality of health care generally.

Just a few unfortunate side effects, you understand, of Mike Harris's great Common Sense Revolution — and Bill 103, I should say — especially his prescription and promise of a 30% tax cut which chiefly benefits the rich with salaries over \$75,000.

Since Bill 103 in particular and the Harris gang in general have shown a blatant contempt for democratic and open government and a shameful lack of respect for human rights and a refusal to withdraw this bill, I will now show my contempt by tearing up Bill 103 right now. I urge all citizens who give a damn about restoring democracy and human rights in Toronto to do the same. That's what I think of your bill; it belongs in the trash.

**The Chair:** You've effectively used up your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation this morning.

**Mr Weitz:** You're welcome.

#### MICHAEL BAXTER

**The Chair:** Would Michael Baxter please come forward. Good morning, Mr Baxter. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Michael Baxter:** Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to appear.

The quandary I've faced in preparing this deputation concerns what has already been said over the past week by people who are not only far more authoritative on this issue than I am but who are, I would contend, able to address the topic of amalgamation and municipal restructuring from a perspective of experience and understanding that should warrant the respect, and indeed the deferment to their authority, of everyone concerned.

A week ago the Minister of Municipal Affairs was being urged by a fellow MPP from across the floor to listen to the deputation of Jane Jacobs. Mr Leach assured all that he would make it a point to listen, albeit that it could probably only be via television. The problem is that Mr Leach has had the opportunity to listen to Jane Jacobs, as well as to the well-considered input of numerous others, on this issue for a few months now. However, "There are none so deaf as those who will not hear." Of course this same admonition must apparently apply as well to the Premier, Mike Harris, and to such other high-profile and dependable members of his entourage as Ernie Eves, Dave Johnson etc, and we can hardly exclude that pugnacious prototype of a true believer, Steve Gilchrist.

Having smugly made the foregoing observations, I suppose it is incumbent on me to be a bit more precise as to why I choose to and why I find it so easy to be in opposition to Bill 103. For starters, this government has been unable to cite a single instance of where amalgamation has succeeded in accomplishing what this one is purported to do. Saved money? No. Been more streamlined and efficient and provided better services to the delight of concerned constituents? Hardly.

Incidentally, Wendell Cox, who made a presentation to Toronto city hall regarding the sad state of municipal amalgamations in our neighbour to the south, could assume the designation of being politically conservative more appropriately than Mike Harris and cohorts, but we'll touch on that shortly. There is all too apparently no dearth of examples of where cities and towns have amalgamated with seemingly inevitable dismal consequences.

1130

In a previous deputation at city hall I referred to a debate of about 30 years ago between the pro-amalgamation mayor of Halifax, Allan O'Brien, who was aligned with the NDP, and the anti-amalgamation mayor of Dartmouth, Roland Thornhill, who later became a high-profile member of the Nova Scotia provincial Tory caucus. That issue aside, I happened to generally have more respect for Allan O'Brien than I did for Rollie Thornhill, but that's not pertinent here; only that the ideological leanings of the two mayors were consistent with their positions in the debate.

With the relatively recent amalgamation of Halifax, Dartmouth and Bedford, we have a report with respect to consequences that would obviously not be readily seized upon by Queen's Park as part of the pro-megacity propaganda campaign. And in still more easterly climes, we hear that the citizenry of historic Louisburg are not exactly enthralled with an amalgamation that had been forced on them by the province of Nova Scotia. You know, one is inclined to wonder what it is that can be so unique about the amalgamation of Metro Toronto that all historic examples of the consequences of this procedure must be so readily dismissed.

Referring again to the above cases from Nova Scotia, we are given to understand that in both instances the editorial boards of their respective daily newspapers were strong advocates of the merging. We note the similarity to Toronto, where editorials in the Toronto Sun and in the Star dismiss all concerns of locally elected municipal politicians for the welfare of their constituents as being merely the matter of wanting to maintain their own jobs. Such crass cynicism is most insultingly offensive. If only the politicos holding the reins of power at Queen's Park were able to twig on to some of the more objective comprehension that exists among their counterparts at the municipal level and, consequently, to share a most valid and genuine apprehension regarding the implications of this bizarre megacity project.

Granted, a need for fiscal responsibility and a situation in that respect may indeed require an unusual extent of intervention, but surely that precludes and in no way provides a valid rationale for the autocratic procedures that have ensued from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs whereby it seems that a city must be destroyed under the guise of saving it.

In wrapping up, I'd like to briefly touch on where ideology might fit into this affair. A fundamental basis for my not subscribing to socialism rests in my adversarial attitude towards bureaucratic centralization and in my firm and well-grounded belief, I feel, that such a policy provides just about the opposite of what Al Leach champions for on behalf of it. Efficient, more streamlined and better provision of services: absolute nonsense. In addi-

tion, not the least among the derogatory aspects of this policy that I hold in such contempt are the inherent infringements on democracy and individual liberty. One need only read the text of Bill 103 and observe what is already happening around its implementation.

During his recent address to a meeting of Citizens for Local Democracy, John Ralston Saul asked us to associate what is coming out of Queen's Park with what began in Germany about 60 years ago. In addition to the National Socialism to which he referred, we might also look to an earlier event of about 80 years ago, to when V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks took control of the Russian Revolution from the more democratically oriented Alexander Kerensky. I suggest that the subsequent history of the Soviet Union provides a more telling example of bureaucratic centralization which is championed by Al Leach is prone to function.

To loosely quote John Sewell, to whom those of us engaged in this struggle are so indebted, this government is neither progressive nor is it conservative. There are those, particularly among supporters of the amalgamation policy, who would dismiss John Sewell as someone who engages in excessive hyperbole. As you may have begun to expect, I would not think this is so. A tendency to totalitarianism exists in the extreme factions of either the so-called left or right wing of the political spectrum. Autocratic suppression may be under the heel of either the corporate state or that of the socialist state. Under neither do we find a structure allowing for free enterprise or for a valid expression of the ideals of democracy. Autocratic incursions on democracy that are coming from this government warrant the type of resistance being espoused by John Sewell and by thousands of us who are thankful that so effective and responsible a leadership is being provided.

If I have any time, I'd like to make some further comment. My debating skills are not so well honed that I would be prepared to encounter Mr Gilchrist and the —

**The Chair:** You wouldn't have to. The Liberal caucus has the questions for you.

**Mr Baxter:** I would make reference to, I believe it was a week ago Saturday, an article in the Mail by John Barber, a columnist, on his experience with a gentleman he'd been acquainted with for quite some years, John Sewell. I don't happen to have that. I can, as I say, only make reference because I don't happen to have it available.

**The Chair:** There's a minute and a half, if you would like to entertain a question from the Liberal caucus.

**Mr Gerretsen:** I have a question. As you notice, government basically campaigned on the promise that it was against big government. Do you find there's some inconsistency with the notion that really we are creating a much bigger government here, as was stated by one of the earlier deponents here today? Do you have any comments on that at all?

**Mr Baxter:** Indeed, I must admit that my response when I first heard this from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs was that I was quite baffled. I couldn't understand what was going on. It's totally inconsistent with what I would have anticipated from a "Progressive Conservative" government. Ideologically, it is quite contradictory

to where one would have anticipated they would be coming, and if there's anything that looks towards big government and inept bureaucracy, it is this sort of legislation that is being implemented under Bill 103.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Baxter.

Would Ruth Lunel please come forward. Ruth Lunel, please.

#### ROB DEGOEIJ

**The Chair:** Very well. I know the next presenter, Rob Degoeij, is here. Could Rob Degoeij come forward. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Rob Degoeij:** Ladies and gentleman, I'd like to open my presentation by thanking you for permitting me the opportunity to speak here.

I am not a guru of municipal affairs. My knowledge of urban planning is superficial at best. Consequently, I'm not likely to say anything this morning that you haven't already heard before. I am a citizen who shares the same fondness for the city in which I live as that expressed by those who have spoken before me and those who will speak or who wish to speak after me. I simply hope to move you with the thought that when a government does something that is so fundamentally wrong, even the most borderline apathetic of citizens will rise up to be heard.

Money is a very powerful motivator, powerful enough, evidently, to switch the issue which lies before us. Money isn't the issue in this proposed amalgamation; it's politics. To alter my political situation without the legitimacy of a referendum is anti-democratic. Urban dwellers and suburbanites share different concerns; they live in different mindsets. I don't want my urban voice being drowned by suburban votes. I don't want to live in a city where my political voice is drowned, I don't want to live in a city where access to my municipal representation is severely limited by time constraints, and I don't want to live in a city where it takes access to only the richest of financial resources to make a credible run at political office. These are the issues which my neighbours and I must discuss and vote on before we can consider your proposals.

But money is a very powerful motivator. You have persuaded many intelligent persons to be passive in their response to your proposals by promising them money — tax cuts.

1140

I am reminded of a scene in a popular movie that aired not so long ago called Batman. I'll lay it out just in case you haven't seen it. This scene depicts our villain, the Joker, riding through the streets trailing big, massive party balloons, throwing money on to the streets to the eager citizens. As he readies his balloons to release noxious fumes into the citizens' air, he tries to discredit our noble hero Batman by asking the citizens who they trust. "Do you trust him or do you trust me?" he says. "I'm giving away free money," and if you'll forgive the weak Jack Nicholson impersonation, he says, "Money, money, money; humma, humma, humma. Who do you trust?"

You have justified your invasion of democracy with a report showing tax savings, a report prepared in haste,

riddled with so many qualifications as to make any claim of credibility laughable. This is not to mention the massive scope limitation you placed on the preparers of this report by prohibiting them from speaking to anyone at the managerial level who might have an informed view. Instead you leave it to the consultants — and I use the word “consultants” in the loosest of terms — to pore over financial statements. No wonder they managed to finish the job in two weeks, with the conclusion already pre-decided. Any first-year accounting student will tell you that you cannot glean useful information from financial statements prepared with accounting policies inappropriate to the purpose the information is meant to support.

There is no money in this proposed amalgamation. Most of the potential savings discussed in your report come from services that are already amalgamated. Even the preparers of your report have been quoted as saying that every municipal amalgamation they've looked at has never revealed any significant net savings. There was an article in the *Globe and Mail* not so long ago which said, “No one has seriously tried to argue that efficiency savings result from populations in excess of 500,000.”

We're left with the realization that the Common Sense Revolution has stopped making common sense. We are left wondering, what are the true motives of this government? Even if there were money to be saved, why does the provincial government effectively believe that those savings should accrue to its tax cut? Why is the government introducing legislation transferring financial responsibility to the municipalities when common sense tells us that redistribution of income should be funded through the income tax system? Why hasn't the government declared that the reserve funds held by Metro municipalities will remain untouched? Humma, humma, humma; money, money, money. Who do you trust?

Even if there were money to be saved — and the KPMG report indicates that even in a best-case scenario those potential savings on a per capita basis are very marginal — why does the provincial government suppose that I would be willing to trade for those savings my access to political representation? Why does the Premier tell us that he wants to listen to as many people as possible and then in the next breath tell us his mind is made up?

The government is not being forthright in its communications to the people, and consequently we have very good reason to be suspicious. Honourable members, it is a sad state of affairs when I report to my friends and family living outside the province that I can no longer trust the government that I voted for in 1994, that I campaigned for in 1990.

There are options. We can work with the municipalities to clarify their roles and responsibilities. I'm not going to tell you that there's no duplication of services or that there's no inbreeding between responsibilities at the Metro and local level.

More importantly, my marginal voice is less effective when hundreds of others who wish to speak are ignored. This committee must listen to all those willing to take the time to prepare a presentation. To do any less is to further pervert our parliamentary procedure.

Second, recognize that the forceful manner with which this legislation is being pushed through is indeed a joke on democracy.

I urge you to tie any recommendations this committee might make to the results of each individual referendum to be held next month.

**Mr Silipo:** Mr Degoeij, thank you for your presentation, particularly as it comes from someone, as you describe yourself, who voted and worked to elect the government in 1990.

You referred in your last comment to the referendum, and I'd like to ask you to talk a little bit more about that. It seems to me that if the government is looking for a way to get out of the mess and the corner they've painted themselves into, the referendum really is the vehicle they can use. If they don't have the courage to say now that they've made a major mistake, certainly the referendum gives them an opportunity to get out of this.

**Mr Degoeij:** I agree. It's a way to save face. Conservative members might be unwilling to do anything else directly, whether that be in cabinet or in caucus, to forcefully voice their opinions, but I think a referendum is a very good opportunity to save face. So is permitting other people to speak before the committee to get the full impact of how many people are against the legislation, versus the 20-20 or the 200-200-200 split which as far as I know right now you're being limited to. There are hundreds more who want to speak. The bias that this committee gets is misstated. I agree that the referendum is very important.

**Mr Silipo:** One other piece I'd like to hear a little bit more from you on is an alternative process to get at some of these changes. Many people who have appeared so far have talked about, “What's the rush?” but they've also talked about being willing to look at changes. I don't think anybody who has sat in that chair has said, “The status quo is what we want.” Again, I'd appreciate your thoughts on what would be a more sensible approach to get at what changes we need to make.

**Mr Degoeij:** Like I said before, I don't really know all about municipal affairs or urban planning or levels of government. I just know that when the world financial press praises Toronto and singles out a two-tiered system of government, it doesn't make sense to me to just throw that two-tiered system away. Why don't we work within the two-tiered system and clarify the roles and responsibilities where there is, as a colleague of mine once put it, inbreeding or dysfunctional behaviour, turf wars and stuff like that? Clarify the roles. Don't just dismiss one of the levels of government thinking that it doesn't have a use.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Degoeij. Would Ruth Lunel come forward, please. B.D. Jolly? This committee is recessed until 3:30 this afternoon. *The committee recessed from 1148 to 1534.*

**The Chair:** Good afternoon. Welcome to the standing committee on general government.

A couple of announcements: Members of the committee have a report from the research branch on the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, which was a request from Mr Colle. I've asked the lawyer for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to be here. If there's any questions on it, we'll take them up, if there's a space some

time in the afternoon. If there isn't a space, perhaps at 6 o'clock or right at 7 o'clock, if you've had a chance to digest it then and want to ask a few questions, we can do that.

**Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole):** I have one question that perhaps they could be prepared for, and that is, what was the last date that this act was amended in any way? It said 1971, but I'm wondering if that was the last time.

**Mr David Spring:** It's a very reasonable one. I'll have it for you.

### STERLING BECKWITH

**The Chair:** Would Sterling Beckwith please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Sterling Beckwith:** Thank you for including me in the list of those allowed to present their views on Bill 103. First, I want to congratulate the current government of Ontario for focusing so much public attention on the future of the greater Toronto area and for having the courage to propose some far-reaching changes. Unlike some who are testifying here, I happen to think these proposals do not go far enough, but I share the hope of everyone else who is making the effort to be heard and of all the many other citizens who are unable to appear that this government is listening to us and that it cares what the ordinary people who live and work in this extraordinary successful city have to say.

I am a semiretired homeowner, living in the first home I ever owned. I made this investment over a decade ago, after a long search and a lifetime of working and saving. Like most people who choose to live in a major metropolitan area, I wanted to have access to the full range of services, opportunities and cultural resources that big city life affords. At the same time, I was looking for the kind of settled, solid residential community and healthy environment with an enlightened approach to development; in short, a place that I and my neighbours could continue to enjoy over the years and have a hand in maintaining through a responsible, accessible local government.

I found everything I was looking for in the city of North York. I'm not bothered or confused by the obvious fact that my home town is a city within a city, because North York is big enough to be a manageable unit, and anything bigger would need to be broken down again to units of a size no larger than what we have now.

My home is a few blocks from the present northern boundary of Metro. If there ever was a meaningless boundary, this is it. For example, I tend to do much of my major shopping in the area north of Steeles. My friends who live there do so because they routinely take full advantage of all the rich resources that lie to the south of Steeles: the mass transit, the roads, the hospitals and nursing homes, the parks and public spaces, the administrative and financial services, and especially the jobs.

That is why I was encouraged to read, in the pamphlet sent out by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, that he believes, "Coordination across the entire GTA is urgent and essential." According to the pamphlet, this government has already given "authority to municipalities,

counties and cities to decide how they are structured, their boundaries, and how many levels of government they need." I hope that's true. It assures us also, "Further consultation will occur before decisions are reached on the best method to ensure area-wide coordination."

I simply want to say from my own personal experience and that of my friends and neighbours on both sides of the line that it would be a mistake to rush to dismantle North York's very popular, smoothly running system of decentralized municipal government and management, evolved over decades through hard work, practical experience on the ground and daily democratic process; that is, it would be a mistake to dismantle such a system unless and until its scope and effectiveness as a functional subdivision of the larger whole that is Toronto can be extended to include the whole of the actual GTA.

**1540**

It is an even bigger mistake, in my view, to pretend that everything lying within the artificial boundaries of the present Metro can be automatically labelled as "fully developed and mature," and therefore utterly different from the vast and growing portions of the real city of greater Toronto that happen to lie just beyond those imaginary or arbitrary lines.

My neighbours and I find it hard to imagine that North York, for example, is all that fully developed or mature when we are awakened each morning by the noise of heavy machinery preparing for the 69 new homes that are currently being built on vacant land in our own backyards. Meanwhile, the latest impressive phase of major urban transformation is now going on in North York's new downtown. What was once fully developed is now being fully redeveloped, and that too requires consistent local input and local control to make sure its negative impact on our quality of life will be minimal. This should be ample evidence that no part of Metro, and certainly not my part, can be treated as if it had somehow finished growing, any more than Markham or Vaughan or Richmond Hill have.

But we are mature enough to be treated like adults by our own elected officials in Queen's Park. That is, we expect to be consulted and our wishes taken seriously before any group of politicians decides unilaterally to dismantle the system of local management and global integration that we have democratically chosen to operate under.

Though many of my neighbours voted for this government, we have been shocked by the shallowness and shortsightedness of the arguments advanced by some of its most vocal spokesmen on this issue and urge you to re-examine the whole notion of maturity. I think you will find it provides no real justification for pushing through a premature and half-baked paper amalgamation scheme, a scheme that is likely to solve no real problems in its present limited form but has managed to upset almost everybody.

Rome wasn't built in a day. There is, after all, a reason why all those studies of Metro have been made previously. Please don't play shuffleboard with Metro while shielding our near neighbours from the impact. Please don't panic if it turns out to take a little longer to find the right mix of solutions that will keep my city, our city,

Ontario's and Canada's world-class city, what the minister's pamphlet proclaims it to be already: "a wonderful and vital place to live, work and raise a family." Thank you very much.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Mr Beckwith, just very briefly, you say in your opening comment that it doesn't go far enough. I wonder if you could elaborate on that. You cite certain efficiencies in North York. Would you suggest that the same efficiencies are found in jurisdictions the size of York and East York? You cite 69 homes being built in your backyard. There's certainly no new development of any great note going on in those two communities.

**Mr Beckwith:** New development, as I tried to point out in my reference to the downtown development that's going on in North York, is certainly not the only kind of development or even the most serious kind of development.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Oh no, but you used that as an example in your backyard. Would you say the same efficiencies exist in York and East York?

**Mr Beckwith:** I'm not sure that they do. I'm also not sure that the kinds of development that are going on in Vaughan and in Markham are all that different from what's going on in North York. That was the point that I wanted to make.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Is that what you meant by this bill not going far enough?

**Mr Beckwith:** Yes.

**Mr Gilchrist:** So you think actually the amalgamation or some integration should be taking place on an even larger scale than Metro's boundaries?

**Mr Beckwith:** Exactly. Unless it does, I feel it's bound to be harmful to the part of the greater Toronto area that happens by accident to lie within the arbitrary lines of Metro.

**Mr Gilchrist:** You'll see that bill coming forward in the near future.

**Mr Beckwith:** I think until it does, it would be a great mistake to push through the amalgamation of Bill 103.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Beckwith, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this afternoon.

#### JACKY KENNEDY

**The Chair:** Would Jacky Kennedy please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Mrs Jacky Kennedy:** Thank you very much. Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Jacky Kennedy. Toronto, specifically north Toronto, is my home and has been for almost 25 years, when I moved here from the United Kingdom. Over this time I've seen many changes, some positive and some not so positive, but always the input of local citizens has been sought by governments during the decision-making process. That's one of the things that has always impressed me most about where I live: the responsiveness of our two levels of government, the city of Toronto and Metro.

Working in the environmental field for the last few years has given me lots of opportunities to work very closely with these two levels of government. Although the system is not perfect, I believe it works, and it is certainly democratic.

My husband and I chose Toronto over the suburbs because we like being close to everything: shops, schools, work, amenities, transit. I should mention that we tried living in Mississauga for a few months but it just wasn't for us. Most of the time we can leave our car at home, which as an environmentalist really suits me. We therefore rely heavily on Toronto's transit system. We are very heavy users of the many bike lanes and routes and enjoy walking around our community and the many parks. Over the years we have watched and participated in the regeneration of the Don from almost a sewer to a restored and renewed urban ecosystem. We can live like this thanks in large part to the efforts and initiatives of Metro and city of Toronto governments.

Now I'm supposed to sit back passively and let the Ontario government change all that simply so they can turn Toronto into an economic engine for the province? My response to this is that no, sir, this is no engine; this is my home. Many people I have spoken to about Bill 103 tell me they're not getting involved because the government has made it quite clear that it will ignore the outcome of the referendum, scheduled for March 3, even if the majority of residents vote no, so these people do nothing. I cannot sit back and let democracy be abused in this way. I'm not a political science major or an expert on municipal government, but I know in my heart that the approach this government is taking on this issue is wrong.

To date the only information I have received from my government on the amalgamation is the One Toronto flyer that was delivered to my door via Canada Post. After reading it I decided it's just an expensive propaganda document, nothing more than junk mail, and paid for, I assume, out of my tax dollars. I wrote to my local MPP, the Honourable Bill Saunderson, and received no reply to my questions or concerns. In addition to not showing up to community meetings on amalgamation, his January contribution to our local newspaper didn't even mention that nasty word, "megacity." Instead he chose to inform his constituents of the opening of a new liquor store in North Toronto. I continue to be amazed by his behaviour and attitude.

I've been reading whatever I can on the megacity issue, and one recent article suggested that the reason the Ontario government is continuing to push through amalgamation of Metro and the six municipalities is so it can follow through on its election promise of a tax decrease to Ontarians. The article suggested that the government intends to finance this tax decrease with the Metro tax dollars it will have access to after amalgamation; so a tax decrease for the rest of Ontario and a major tax ripoff for those of us who have chosen to make their homes in Toronto.

The proposed property tax changes for the Metro area, AVA, are going to hurt our family very badly. Rather than being rewarded for choosing to live in a dense urban area with easy access to services, we feel we're being penalized. Those who choose suburban sprawl and the high energy and infrastructure costs associated with this lifestyle will be rewarded instead. This will encourage more development in areas that should be reserved for agriculture and more waste of our natural, non-renewable resources.

For small Toronto business owners this tax increase could be the death knell. This will directly affect our family. My husband is a retailer in the downtown core. The board of trade predicts the average increase to small businesses will be approximately \$7,000. How could this possibly help promote Toronto as a business leader and a world-class city? Perhaps the idea is to wipe out the small business community, tear down the friendly storefronts, widen the roads and build more office towers and malls: a developer's dream and the death of any city. I'd really like to know what this government's true intentions are.

**1550**

In addition, the downloading of many services now shared by the province will be more nails in the coffin of Toronto. Transit, already financed two thirds by the fare box and suffering ridership declines due to lessened service as a result of the last provincial cuts, will lead to even more people driving, which will further compromise our air quality, making the city even more unattractive as a place to live.

I believe that if this government continues on its present course, within five years the Toronto we know will disappear. It will be dirty, polluted, empty of people except for the homeless and ridden with crime. Am I overreacting? Perhaps, but everything I've learned about this megacity so far leads me to believe this or a modified version will happen.

I would rather see the government abandon its present course and start embracing the full meaning of democracy. Number one, start listening to the people. Full public consultation should be implemented immediately to gather input from the people who live and work here. Yes, many areas could be improved, and I'm sure there is some waste and duplication. But there are also good reasons to keep the present system in place.

The many reports that have been prepared on the issue of governance of the GTA all have stated clearly that the best government is the one that is closest to the people, and that small is beautiful. The Ontario government should not ignore these reports or the 2.3 million people who will be impacted by their decision.

To quote from your own document, "Toronto is more than just an economy. It's the Danforth...Roy Thompson Hall...Metro Zoo...the Toronto Maple Leafs" and "the Caribana festival." It's also my home and the place my husband and I decided to raise our family. We don't like being left out in the cold. Thank you for your time.

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Ladies and gentlemen, there are some new folks in the audience, and I must remind you that the rules of the chamber apply to rules of the committee room. We're not to have audience participation. I'd appreciate it if you'd keep that to a minimum. Every time I have to make this announcement or call a recess the presenters, who only have a short period of time to do their presentations, lose time. I'd appreciate it if you'd keep that in mind.

We have three minutes for the Liberal caucus.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much, Mrs Kennedy. I think you hit home when you said that this is not an engine; it's a home. I just want to read you something

someone said about speaking to the people in Elora. They said: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride? I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities. The issue is to find out how to distribute services fairly and equally." That was Premier Harris speaking in 1994, but he basically agreed that bigger is not better and that essentially identity is important.

People say that all the downtown environmentalists are the ones complaining about the megacity, that nobody else seems to be that concerned except the south-of-Bloor crowd, as they say. How would you as an environmentalist respond to that?

**Mrs Kennedy:** This government and the environment are an oxymoron, actually. I represent a group called the North Toronto Green Community. We're a very active non-profit community group. We've been around for a couple of years. We have 16 projects on the go at the moment. We started off as a green community under the green communities initiative. One of the first environmental programs this government cut was the green communities initiative, so the funding we were going to get to implement some really good programs in the city of Toronto was taken away from us.

The levels of government that have been really responsive to us are the city of Toronto and Metro. Although we try to be sustainable as much as we can, and we don't have any staff people, everything we have done — we've gone through our MPP and we've talked — involving this particular government has been shot down. My concern about this government having total control over an area the size of Toronto is that development and all the other unfriendly kinds of things are going to take precedence over things like regenerating the Don and the Humber watersheds and cleaning up the air.

The government has said a lot of things about cleaning up the air, but our air is polluted. We have many people every year who die from the air. The city of Toronto and Metro have responded to those concerns; the province hasn't. In fact, they shut down the only emissions testing centre we had. It's now gone. I haven't seen any evidence that what I predict will not happen. I've requested interviews with the Minister of Environment. We've never, ever been allowed to even speak to him. It's unbelievable.

**Mr Colle:** Your MPP has had nothing to communicate to you about this proposal?

**Mrs Kennedy:** No.

**Mr Colle:** In his latest newsletter there's no reference to it? All you've gotten is the contemptible blue package that was brought to your door?

**Mrs Kennedy:** That's correct.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs Kennedy, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

NICK DE CARLO

**The Chair:** Would Nick De Carlo please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr De Carlo. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Nick De Carlo:** Thank you. I put together a brief written presentation. There are a few typos in it that I'll point out as I go through them. I didn't have a lot of time to put into this presentation because I'm very busy in my job, but I thought it important enough to be here. I'll try to supplement what's written with some verbal presentation.

Before I begin I want to say, with reference to the decorum of the people attending and visiting and observing the proceedings today, that I've had the opportunity on several occasions to sit in at the Legislature and I've seen the behaviour on the Legislature floor, in particular of the party that's presently in power. Certainly the people here are much more genteel than the Legislature is. I don't see any fault with people clapping or supporting or whatever. I think it's important that if you truly want to set a proper tone, then you should practise what you preach.

**The Chair:** Just by way of response, Mr De Carlo, if you've watched the Legislature, when there are any presentations or there is audience participation, folks are actually removed. So we've been quite liberal.

**Mr De Carlo:** That's in the audience. That's not on the Legislature floor.

**The Chair:** I'm talking about the audience here, sir.

**Mr De Carlo:** I know. But I've seen the Legislature floor, and that's what I'm talking about.

There are three areas I want to cover: First is the quality of life; second is the effect of amalgamation and accompanying government proposals on workers who are injured at work; and third is the issue of democracy.

Quality of life: I've lived at my current address for just under 22 years. It's at the corner of Major and Sussex, below Bloor Street. The quality of life there is second to none in the core of any great city in North America — probably a lot of people have talked about that — and probably in the whole world. But poverty and the exodus of lower- and middle-income people from the city core will change all that. Over the years I've noticed changes that I know will be exacerbated by Bill 103.

I live on a corner where I have a small yard, a small plot of grass, gardens, there's a small path in front of the house, there's a porch I can sit on and neighbours pass by and stop and talk. We shovel each other's sidewalks in winter. We walk up the street about a block to small stores run by small business people. We know them from working with them and shopping at their places over the years. We can talk not just about what we're ordering that particular day but about the affairs of the community.

I can walk to the university; I can walk and shop at Bloor and Yonge; I can go to the Kensington Market; I can go to areas on College Street and different ethnic communities, from the Italian community to the Chinese community; I can walk to the art gallery; I can walk to the Royal Ontario Museum; I can walk to libraries; I can go skating within walking distance; I can go to gyms; I can walk to city hall and to Queen's Park, and the list goes on. In that situation, in spite of the proximity to major cultural aspects of the Toronto area, I can walk out and tend my garden and sit on a plot of grass in the same vicinity. You don't see that in other major cities. That's

what I'm concerned about in terms of the actual life in the city and what I think has to be protected.

What does the megacity mean to me? It means control by developers. It means a city with big highways, big buildings, and it means the destruction of the city core.

1600

You can't separate this proposal, and I don't think it was ever meant to be separated in terms of the government approach to this, from other proposals to do with property tax structure, education, welfare, other major changes that are coming about in the period of time we're going through right now.

What does that mean? It means the city centre is going to be defined by the needs of business. Property taxes are going to skyrocket, and the estimates have been done. I'm sure you've heard, and I don't think I have to go into it, about the difference in cost it's going to mean in terms of property taxes. What that means, of course, is that small businesses will be forced out of the local community.

We've already seen the beginnings of that on Bloor Street, near where I live, where some small cafes and video stores etc were forced out by large-scale business. When property taxes go up, of course they're going to move in and the core of Toronto is going to become the place where tourism and business interests dominate and people's interests are secondary and where people can no longer afford to live. That means over a period of years to come, with these changes we're going to see a change in the composition of people who live in the city core and we're going to see a change in the way the actual core is designed.

I noticed probably around the mid-1980s for the first time on Bloor Street somebody looking through the garbage for something to eat. I hadn't seen that before and I've lived there since 1975. That was the mid-1980s. Since that time, the situation has gotten a lot worse. Today when you walk along Bloor Street you can't go a block without somebody begging for money. You can't go a block without seeing somebody sleeping or staying out overnight in the cold or in the summer. That's the way the situation has deteriorated up until now. What will happen, no doubt, is that people who are impoverished will be forced to stay. They'll be sleeping on the streets and that's going to get worse, and people who have enough to live on will be forced to move. I see that situation getting a lot worse. That means we're going to be moving into a style of living that you see in American cities and possibly other cities around the world.

Another area I want to talk about is the effect of changes in the Workers' Compensation Act, which may not seem to be relevant at first mention, but in fact the Workers' Compensation Act is being changed. A new bill has been introduced by the Conservative government, Bill 99, and that bill will specifically exclude many workers from coverage by workers' compensation, as well as reduce the amount of benefits they get. The forerunner to Bill 99, the new workers' compensation bill, the Jackson report, specifically stated the objective would be to get rid of 50% of claims, which are repetitive strain injury claims, occupational disease claims and other claims, soft tissue claims, from workers' compensation.

The new bill doesn't, on the face of it, say that but the bill is written in such a way that it can happen. What does that mean? When workers are permanently injured — they have a back injury; they have repetitive strain injury where they can no longer use their arms and hands in the workplace; they have an occupational disease where they can't return to work because they can't face the exposure at work — what happens, and what should happen, is that workers who go on workers' compensation are compensated for that.

The workers' compensation system is paid for by employers. It's paid for by employers to the tune of billions of dollars a year to cover injuries at work. But if a worker isn't covered under workers' compensation and is forced out of the workplace, which is what this bill will provide for, then they have no choice but to go on welfare, particularly in an area like Toronto where there is a high degree of non-unionization, which means that workers have nothing to fall back on if they can't get compensation in the workplace.

When they go on to welfare, that means they go on to the property tax structure in the new regime that's being proposed by the present government of Ontario and that adds to the burden of property taxes that we've talked about. This isn't talked about very much, but we're talking about billions of dollars shifted from employer funds and eventually a good percentage of that going to welfare costs. This is what I mean when I say there is a whole package of legislation that can't be separated.

It means that people will suffer, first of all, from the indignity of not being compensated for injuries that are not their fault, that are caused in the workplace, and secondly, because they'll be forced on to welfare and impoverished, it will add to the misery in the city, which I see as doing nothing but growing in the years to come under the current direction that we're following.

The final thing I want to talk about is democracy. In talking about democracy, I want to point out that in the many decades since the advent of the modern industrial society our country has evolved into an elaborate democracy. Though a democracy has shortcomings, it has changed the daily relationship in which workers were treated as lower class people who depended on the upper class to take care of them. The upper class dominated government at all levels of society. Since then, society has come to be seen as involving the participation of all people in the governance of our daily lives. This is being fundamentally altered by Bill 103 and other legislation that is being brought in.

Why do I say it's being fundamentally altered? The process is one good, clear indication, and I'm sure this has been talked about by other people. The bill is introduced, it's introduced in a very short period of time, there is little in the way of consultations, hearings have to be forced. The attitude of the government is, "It doesn't matter if you're against it, it doesn't matter if we have consultation, it doesn't matter if you have a vote, we're going to do it anyway." That process tells us that we as citizens have lost any right to consultation, any right to a say. That process in itself will lead to conflict, it has to, because you can't deny citizens who have the right to have a say in their society that right.

The whole process of establishing trustees who have control over the finances and the spending, who overrule, without even being passed into law, the governance of the city councils; a transition team which is able to define contracts, hire people, define a direction for a new municipality in the megacity without recourse to public consultation, behind closed doors and without any opportunity to overrule those decisions once those decisions have been made, that to me is not democracy. I don't think that's democracy to anyone.

**The Chair:** Mr De Carlo, I hate to interrupt but we're already beyond your allotted time. I wonder if you could finish up quickly in light of the fact that I had a little interruption for you there.

**Mr De Carlo:** In light of the fact that?

**The Chair:** That I interrupted you for a few seconds.

**Mr De Carlo:** The view of the education system with a small number of trustees who aren't properly paid — and what that means is that the upper classes will dominate in the education system. We know the direction that's headed in terms of other government policies, and I can get into that if you have any questions; the welfare system; the jails, and we're heading towards privatization of jails; the attitude in the workplace, where we're reviewing all the legislation in the workplace in terms of workers' compensation, health and safety legislation, employment standards legislation. All these point to efforts to restrict the rights of workers in the workplace and restrict the rights of citizens in society and to privatize and turn over to profit those social aspects that rightly belong to the people and not to private profit.

My final comment would be that part of the reason we're able to live in the city we have today is that over the years people expressed their opinions on things like the Spadina Expressway and, by expressing their opinions and having the right to express their opinions, were able to stop changes that would have destroyed our city. This bill does the opposite. This brings in a system where those who have power and money will decide what happens, and the rest of us will have to survive any way we can.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr De Carlo, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### KRISTEN FAHRIG

**The Chair:** Would Kristen Fahrig please come forward? Good afternoon, Kristen. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Kristen Fahrig:** In spite of my nervousness, I am very happy to have this opportunity to speak on the public record about a bill that I feel will make big changes in all aspects of our lives, not just in Toronto and the surrounding cities but also in the rest of the province and the country as well.

I'm here representing myself as a visual artist, a costume-maker in the theatre, living in a neighbourhood just west of here on College Street. For the record, I am opposed to the idea of the megacity and I am also opposed to the contents of Bill 103.

Toronto is apparently a word that means "a meeting place on the lake" where different peoples could come

and share stories, music and probably even recipes. So far, Toronto has lived up to its name. If there is a place we could think of as that meeting place, I would guess it might be where Harbourfront is today, where there is so much cultural exchange.

**1610**

The city has recognized the importance of the arts and culture sector through supportive funding policies and practices that have resulted in an annual contribution of \$8.4 billion to gross domestic product in greater Toronto. While other economic sectors had a 9% loss of employment during the last recession, employment in arts and culture rose by 11%. In 10 years, Toronto has seen a growth in arts attendance from six million to 15 million.

What is this product called art or culture? In my opinion, art is a visual or audible expression of the soul. An artist's work is to look at the big questions, like what is life, death, friendship, sense of place, and to communicate these ideas through symbol and themes. With this in mind, I would like to take a look at the story that is contained in Bill 103.

**Bill 103, by the Honourable A. Leach:** This story is about 25 pages long. The first five pages talk about the dissolving of seven governments of Metropolitan Toronto and the formation of the megacity corporation, where the inhabitants have less representation.

Then, for the next 20 pages, we hear the story of the people who will really be running the city, called the trustees and the transition team, and we hear all about their powers. These people are appointed by provincial cabinet behind closed doors. They can hire, fire, promote without review. They have access to assets and budgetary surplus and also the services of the city. They can review all documents and make changes. They can set the rate of taxation and the rate of expenditure. All budgets must be approved by them and once they've made a decision it cannot be questioned, except by the police, who can get more money if they ask nicely. Their salaries and expenses, plus the salaries and expenses of their staff, are paid for by the city at rates they set for themselves. They are above the court of law.

This section about the trustees and the transition team reminds me of a book that we studied in grade 6 called Animal Farm. I don't know if you've read it, but basically —

*Applause.*

**The Chair: Order.**

**Ms Fahrig:** Basically it is a satire of the Russian revolution. It is kind of depressing but it is a great story. While we were reading this book in grade 6, we were taught the difference between dictatorship and the social democratic system that we have chosen in Canada, where each person has equal opportunity. If I were to look for one theme in Bill 103, it would be this: the change from Toronto — a place to live, the meeting place on the lake, where people of all cultures and economic status have equal say in the management of the city — to Toronto the megacity corporation, where all inhabitants contribute to individual profit of a few.

There is nothing in this story that indicates a concern on the part of the author for the health and wellbeing of

the people or the neighbourhoods that would provide the lifeblood of the mega-corporation.

My neighbourhood just west of here has been changing lately. In the first year that I moved in to go to school I was waiting for a bus at Dufferin and Bloor, north of where I live, and I saw three men chasing each other with knives through the crowded rush-hour traffic. One of them passed about four feet away from me with a big kitchen knife, and I have to say I was pretty spooked. For a few years after that I very rarely, if I could help it, walked north of where I live; I very rarely went through Dufferin Grove park.

Later I became friends with people who have a dog and I began to spend more time in the park. We noticed that there was some gang turf stuff happening and once or twice we even had to call the police because it looked a bit like it was going to get dangerous.

About two or three years ago we started to notice a difference. First of all, there were some flyers posted asking all the people in the surrounding neighbourhood to come to a meeting to talk about what we wanted for our park. Then we noticed flower boxes and a huge sandpile for the kids, and young people busy working, weeding, raking, taking care of the wading pool. These changes have come from people in the community who have created a place that supports the diverse activities of all the people who share the park and give young people a much-needed sense of place by involving them in the care of their park.

Yesterday was such a beautiful day I decided to go for a skate in Dufferin park and I met one of the people who was involved in the group called Friends of Dufferin Grove Park. These are the people who have been involving the young kids in the park. She was in the clubhouse baking cookies. I asked her what the megacity is going to mean to her group and the work they have been doing.

She said the megacity is going to have a huge impact. Their grass-roots initiative depends mostly on relationship for its success. The two people who have been most key in supporting them in their positive work have been the director of parks and recreation and the mayor, who has made a number of visits to the park and knows people by name.

In the megacity corporation, the director of parks and recreation will have too many added responsibilities to respond to their questions, and will a mega-mayor be able to find time to come out and get to know the kids at Dufferin Grove Park?

When the Honourable Al Leach first presented his Bill 103, he said that fewer elected representatives would mean less confusion because we would know who they are, but knowing who he is does not mean we can call him up and talk to him about our concerns, let alone develop a relationship which is of primary importance for the improvement of our neighbourhood. I'm talking about relationship over time with an individual person.

I, for one, do not share the scorn that so many people seem to have for politicians these days. We elect representatives and we pay them to look after our interests to see that everybody has access to the basic necessities of life, from a roof over our head, healthy food to eat, a

place to work and an environment that nourishes our soul.

Generosity of spirit is the first and foremost thing I expect from someone I choose as a friend. Is it unreasonable for me to expect the same generosity of spirit from someone with whom I entrust the health of my community? Unfortunately, I can find none of this in the megacity corporation as described in Bill 103.

**The Chair:** Ms Fahrig, I'm sorry to interrupt you, but we've gone a little bit beyond your allotted time and so I'm going to have to ask you to close your presentation, but I do want to thank you for coming forward this afternoon and making your presentation.

**Ms Fahrig:** Are you giving me another minute?

**The Chair:** You're way beyond the allotted time already.

**Ms Fahrig:** I'm beyond 10 minutes?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Ms Fahrig:** Oh, I'm sorry.

**The Chair:** But I want to thank you for coming forward this afternoon.

1620

### SUZANNE LAWSON

**The Chair:** Would Suzanne Lawson please come forward. Good afternoon, Suzanne.

**Miss Suzanne Lawson:** Thank you for allowing me to be here. I've lived both south of Bloor and north of Bloor and outside Metro and even beyond the GTA in this province. My profession has many facets to it but I come to you today because I see myself as a bit of an expert in change management. I'd like to focus on that, not to specifically speak about amalgamation at this point but to raise some issues around the management of change that I believe are important.

As I see over years of experience in managing major change in organizations, particularly voluntary organizations, there are several steps. The first is to be really clear why the change is required, what the drivers are for the change; and second, what the principles are that underlie the kind of change we want to make.

Then we need to look at alternative solutions, alternative changes. Then we move to saying, what's the impact of each of those alternatives, both environmental and social? Then you come to the choice of the kind of change you want to make, which needs to align with the rationale, the drivers and the principles. Then you put in place things that will support the positive aspects of the change and reduce or ameliorate the negative aspects of the change. Then you move decisively and then you put in place something that will help you shift that change and make mid-course changes if required.

Clearly, there needs to be full consultation throughout and I've learned that the hard way.

As I see it, and admittedly I may not see everything, there are two steps you've clearly done. You've looked at alternatives for organizing Metropolitan Toronto; I don't see any evidence that you've clearly looked at the one you're proposing. Secondly, you've moved decisively. Maybe all the other things have been done, but if not, I predict increased chaos and failure for what you want

to achieve. Let me take a few minutes to go into a few of those.

In terms of the rationale for the change, I'm not clear. Are we looking to save money? Are we looking to get better government for our citizens? Are we looking to increase employment? Are we looking to reduce municipal politicians? Are we looking to attract more business? I want to be clear about what your major calls are in this plan.

In terms of principles, what are the principles you've chosen to be central to this plan? Is it easy accessibility to government? Is it that neighbourhoods are essential and that's the organizing principle? Is it mega-government and mini-cost? What are the principles? I need to be clear about those and I'm not sure we, as citizens, are.

Why was this solution, this proposal chosen over the others that have been looked at? I'd like to know. That's why I'm prepared to say that I'm not sure what the solutions should be. What impact studies have occurred? What do we know about the social impact of this proposal? Where has the research been done? Who has done the work? Who has shared that understanding of impact? What has been put in place to reduce negative impact? We need to know. I'd go on but I think the point is clear.

I spent three years working half-time in my job recently to bring about a major change with a group of volunteers and team leaders in an organization that finds it very difficult to change. We have brought about a changed strategic direction. If it took us three full years of a major piece of work, consulting at every step, then I'd expect an even more rigorous kind of planning going on to a change as major as the one I'm seeing here today. I need to trust you've gone through those steps that I've outlined and I need to see evidence that you have.

Since I find it difficult to find evidence, I need to trust this committee to ensure to itself that those steps have been taken and that there's been far more thorough preparatory work than I've been able to see. So am I in favour of amalgamation? I don't know. But when I get the answer to those questions I believe I'll be in a better position to speak about it.

**Mr Marchese:** Suzanne, you raised many important questions and I would like to leave that time to Mr Gilchrist to respond to some of them because they're very good.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I think your questions demonstrate indeed the complexity and the challenge that governments always face. In fact Mr Crombie's task — some people believe he went out and reinvented the wheel as another royal commission when his sole job was to pull together all the previous studies that had been done on this subject, a total of 60. Every one of the members has a tab in the back of their binder that lists every one of those very detailed submissions.

When you send someone of Mr Crombie's capabilities out there with a group of very experienced municipal leaders, including a number of sitting mayors and other municipal elected officials, and they in their wisdom pull together all these conclusions, I guess that becomes a very compelling argument for us. The final judgement, of course, as always — it was the same when the NDP brought in the social contract and the Liberals did what

they did to doctors. At the end of the day everybody has to decide what their philosophies and the best evidence lead them to do. In this case, Mr Crombie's final report was split on the issue of amalgamation.

**Miss Lawson:** That's right.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Half of the panel said to go four-city, so still amalgamation, and the other half said go all the way to one city. That's the context we operate in.

**Miss Lawson:** Yes, and I understand that. I think one of the real tasks you have then is to make it extraordinarily clear why you've gone one way and not the other. Communication is very much a part of how we operate organizations.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I agree.

**Miss Lawson:** I understand the challenge of leadership. I'm in it myself and if you think government's bad, you ought to try church. But what you have to do is continue to be really clear about why you've chosen this over this and make it helpful for those of us who are struggling to understand.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I agree with you and that is the challenge we face over these next few weeks, and hopefully the more people ask specific questions, and at town hall meetings every night, the better chance we'll have to lay out some of the answers.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Miss Lawson, for making a presentation this afternoon.

#### PAUL FOSTER

**The Chair:** Would Paul Foster please come forward. Good afternoon, Paul. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Paul Foster:** I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to speak today on Bill 103. I have brought copies of my notes for your reference, but for my verbal presentation I will be reading a shorter version.

My name is Paul Foster and I'm a citizen of the city of Toronto. I live on Augusta Avenue in the Spadina-Queen area. I am employed as a researcher. I'm in the process of starting a business. I have been a resident of the city of Toronto for approximately nine years. I have lived in several different communities and neighbourhoods of the city: the High Park area, the Bloor-Christie area and the Church-Wellesley area. I love this city, its diversity, its civility, from the bike lanes I take to work to the green spaces I use for hiking and birdwatching. Toronto is truly a city that works.

I'm a volunteer with the High Park volunteer stewardship program which has been set up to assist the city of Toronto's department of parks and recreation to run a test plot program examining different methods to bring back the black oak savannah ecosystem. The High Park program is run through the High Park Citizens Advisory Committee and is an example of innovative local government. Residents under the supervision of park staff are working for ecological restoration, bringing back lost species and preserving what still remains. As citizens, we are working in conjunction with park staff, providing energy and enthusiasm. We cannot replace their expertise, but we can add volunteer labour to projects staff would not otherwise have time to do.

As enamoured as I am with tree and plant communities, I haven't come here to talk about these commun-

ities, but rather another community that will be endangered by Bill 103.

#### 1630

The community I'm referring to is a human community. There are a variety of types of human communities; some are geographic, ethnic, linguistic and religious. Human communities, like natural communities, can take a certain amount of neglect and mistreatment, but beyond a certain point they start to deteriorate and weaken.

The community that I am particularly concerned about is the gay and lesbian community in Toronto. It is a rich community making important contributions to many facets of community life such as theatre, fine arts, film, fashion, education, financial, medical and business. We represent a sizeable portion of the downtown population. Though we are a downtown core community, our members can be found throughout the city. It's a very diverse community, as we are people of different genders, ethnic origins, linguistic, religious, political and economic backgrounds who share a common sexual orientation. We have been described as a "community of interest," men and women who share some important values in common.

I have no official status in the gay and lesbian community. No one has elected me to represent them. I speak as an interested citizen, as a gay man who firmly believes that Bill 103 is a threat to my community. I also recognize there are men and women of goodwill, even from my own community, who view Bill 103 as being neutral or possibly good for Toronto. I have no problem with that. What I have a problem with is that the democratic process is being done away with. The principle of allowing those most affected by a decision to decide is being ignored. Bill 103 is being imposed on the residents of Toronto. It will have the effect of disfranchising gay and lesbian Torontonians.

Nine years ago I had a decision to make on whether to stay in the closet for the rest of my life as a "latent homosexual" or to come out as a gay man. In reaching the decision to come out, I pondered, "Where would I live as a gay man with the least amount of discrimination?" I decided to move to Toronto. Toronto has been drawing gays and lesbians for decades as it provides a reasonable chance for us to live our lives as we choose. We have made opportunities for ourselves to live lives based on self-respect. We have developed community organizations which meet a myriad of needs, from recreation to philanthropy to AIDS and HIV support services. We have made significant contributions to our city. It has returned the favour and supported us in areas where we have requested assistance. As a community, we have found ways to be included in the public debate on issues that concern us.

It is my belief that the gay and lesbian community will be a big loser if amalgamation is allowed to go through. Amalgamation of an urban community like the city of Toronto with more suburban municipalities like North York and Scarborough will drown out our voice. Over the last 25 years we have begrudgingly won a voice at the city level — won by protests, by ballot and by active participation in the democratic process. One of the first steps in the democratic process was in 1973, when the gay and lesbian community worked for the passage of a

resolution prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation at the level of hiring practices within the city of Toronto. There have been many fights since 1973. We have won some and lost some, but overall we have become a community with a place at the table. The city has dedicated resources and priorities to celebrating the diversity of the gay and lesbian community in Toronto and has seen this diversity as a strength and an asset.

My recommendation is simple: Kill this bill. Kill Bill 103 before it starts to kill members of my community. A recent study on suicide found young gays were more likely to try suicide. It studied young males and found homosexual and bisexual males were 13.9 times more at risk of making a serious suicide attempt. This report was done by two suicide researchers at the University of Calgary. Pierre Tremblay, one of the researchers, was quoted as saying, "If somebody even suspects they are gay, they often get beaten up, they get ostracized, they get ridiculed." As quoted in an October 7, 1996, *Globe and Mail* article, Nicki Monahan, coordinator of services for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth at the Children's Aid Society of Toronto, stated, "Kids who think about suicide are often hopeless about the future, and that's often a big part of it for gay and lesbian teens who can't picture a positive life for themselves as a gay or lesbian person." The loss of our voice which Bill 103 will lead to will not make this picture any brighter.

As our community loses its voice, questions are: Will the population at large sense us as less valuable citizens, and will the number of attacks on gays increase in the downtown core as suburban males come hunting for 'fags and queers' to beat up? If the public health concerns of gays, lesbians and bisexuals are not addressed at the mega-Toronto level, this could lead to increased HIV infection rates. The bottom line is that no changes to the structure of local government should be made without the consent of the local citizens, using a democratic process which draws on their knowledge, goodwill, and support.

My last thoughts on the subject are that this ill-conceived bill will do great harm to the citizens of the city of Toronto, and to the gay and lesbian community in particular. Toronto will no longer be safe for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community. Will this lead to an increase of people leaving the city who will take with them a large portion of the city's economic base?

I would like to thank the committee again for the opportunity to speak on this important issue.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Foster. You've effectively used the time allotted for your presentation. I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### TANNY WELLS

**The Chair:** Would Tanny Wells please come forward. Good afternoon, Ms Wells, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Tanny Wells:** Members of the committee, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. My name is Tanny Wells. I am a member of the executive of the South Rosedale Ratepayers' Associa-

tion. I am also the vice-chair of the city of Toronto's Task Force to Bring Back the Don. As a long-time member of the Progressive Conservative Party, I campaigned for the Minister of Municipal Affairs in the last election. Today I am speaking as a citizen who has been an active member of the civil society which we have enjoyed in this city for many years. I appear before you today to urge you to withdraw this bill before you destroy what has taken so many years to create.

I am a real estate agent. That gives me access to the heart of many homes in the city. I have found that you can learn a lot by reading what is posted on the refrigerator door. Recently I found the following quote on the door of one of the city's better-known activists. It sums up a lot of what I feel about the megacity and its appendages, AVA and the download of social services: "We trained very hard...but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form into a team we would be reorganized. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing; and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization." This was written in 210 BC by Petronius the Arbiter, who was a famous satirist during the reign of Nero. It applies equally well in Toronto, 1997 AD.

Today I find myself confused and demoralized. I have been a lifelong Tory. I actively campaigned in my neighbourhood, as I said, for the now Minister of Municipal Affairs. I was confident that a Tory government would govern in the traditional Tory way, that open process, small government, community participation and consultation would all be present under a Conservative government. I am a Conservative. I believe in saving what is best. I believe in change, carefully thought out, but not in destruction. But what do I see in this legislation?

#### 1640

I see a government which I helped to elect bullying and sidelining another government which I helped to elect. Members of the provincial cabinet and in fact the Premier himself have said, and Tory wisdom would have you believe, that local government is the level which needs strengthening. Why then is a whole level of elected representatives being eliminated not through a consultative process but by what almost appears to be a whim?

I believe that every elected councillor and mayor in the cities, borough and Metro council agrees it is time to restructure the municipal governments of the GTA. The matter of how has been the subject of many studies. As we all know, none suggested the megacity route.

The first time I heard of amalgamation was in late October in what I considered to be a throwaway line from Minister Leach following a meeting of his constituency ratepayers on the subject of MVA-AVA. As we were saying goodbye and the meeting was breaking up, he asked what we would think of an amalgamated city. As I recall, one of the 20 thought it might be all right, but only if done in stages, some didn't hear the question, and most people responded negatively. But clearly it was not a concept we'd ever thought about because until that time it had never been suggested by anyone of consequence.

Not one of the studies ever recommended it, and it does not fit with the stated goals of strengthening of local government. I have no evidence that the concept came from any serious study. I think the concept was handed to the Crombie panel, who were directed to make it work. But where did it come from? Was it the only structure which would allow the mega-dump of social service and housing costs? The rhetoric suggesting great savings of tax dollars is only supported by one study, and it's reputed to have holes. By and large, there is no proof that the outcome of amalgamation will save anything. In fact, those most knowledgeable in the field have said it will be much more expensive than the existing system.

As a Tory and one who treasures the democratic rights which have been protected and handed down to us, I am appalled that I could in any way be held responsible for the reduction of democracy which Bill 103 entails.

The trusteeship and transition team provisions of the bill are particularly draconian. We are a sophisticated political society, and in our Constitution the traditions of over 150 years of government have to be considered to have real validity. Trusteeships are imposed when something is really wrong, broken, illegal, corrupt. I cannot agree that the present situation of municipal governance is in any of those states. It may be outgrown, and many citizens who have been following the series of studies would agree that change is necessary. Totally unnecessary and insulting are the arbitrary methods being used. The methodology being used at this moment is that of "might is right." I might also describe it as Soviet-style negotiation in which there is a winner and a loser. Our traditions incline much more to consultation and to working to a win-win outcome. You hold the power of the government in trust for future generations. While you hold it, you no doubt have the legal right to do many things. I implore you not to use this right to do wrong.

Moving along to the number of councillor provisions, I believe an involved citizenry is important to the strength and protection of neighbourhoods and community. Local government should therefore be accessible and, at the same time, as accountable as possible to the citizens. The premise that citizens of Metro Toronto will have more efficient and accountable government because of having fewer politicians does not make sense to me. It necessitates more bureaucrats, who are generally more expensive than politicians. As for the neighbourhood committees, what are they and who are they, and how are they accountable? It seems to me they will be another layer to further insulate politicians from the public.

Is there something different about Torontonians that we should have one councillor for approximately 50,000 in population while North Bay has one for every 5,300?

I truly appreciate the democracy which we enjoy in the city. Our councillors answer their phones and worry about the fine details of what makes a good neighbourhood and a liveable city. They make the bureaucrats work for us. Furthermore, in the several neighbourhood battles that I've been involved in, notably the preservation of the Rosedale subway station and the battle to stop the Leslie Street expressway, we have found ourselves aligned with the city against Metro at the Ontario Municipal Board. In the Summerhill Marathon development, the agreement

was the result of careful negotiation, with leadership from the local councillors and the mayor and involvement of the neighbourhoods and the developer. In my experience, if left to the decision-makers of a larger political entity, the outcome would not have been so neighbourhood-friendly.

My experience with Bring Back the Don similarly makes me feel very protective of the local government which made it possible. Now the project has expanded upstream and throughout the watershed, but I believe that nothing would have happened without the encouragement and care of the city. Bring Back the Don is an outstanding example of public-private partnership.

The other two objections which I have to Bill 103 are: (1) It is not in any way tied to the restructuring of the GTA, which was recommended by every study on the subject, and without it, whichever city of Toronto we have will be weak; (2) The office of mayor will be the most expensive elected office to achieve in the country. If that's not a recipe for a politician not being accountable to the electorate, I don't know what is.

To add insult to injury, all these changes, the AVA and downloads as well as amalgamation, are being rushed through without impact studies. I might say in an aside that if there are impact studies, they aren't being released. No one knows what the results will be, only that it will be different. Mayor Hall calls this "reckless" behaviour, and I agree with her.

Minister Leach has said on more than one occasion in my hearing that he has the power to delay the municipal elections for a full year. I urge him and the government to take the pressure off, to slow down and do this restructuring properly. Our city deserves the best of care. Our democratic tradition deserves to be protected. We can win if we all work together to build a strong, vibrant and economically sound Toronto.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Wells, for your presentation. That's all your time. We appreciate your coming forward today.

1650

#### BEV WATSON

**The Chair:** Would Beverley Watson please come forward. Good afternoon, Ms Watson. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Bev Watson:** Hello. My name is Bev Watson. I was born in Toronto and, except for three short years, I have lived all my life in Ontario. I recently retired. My professional career included several years as a trust officer with a large trust company, financial manager for a first Canadian organization, administrator for a group home; I have done volunteer work for agencies concerned with environmental protection, women's rights, education, the homeless and the aged. All these areas, I believe, are being disastrously affected by the Harris government's present and proposed policies.

But this is not what I wish to speak about today. A friend recently reminded me of the first principle of advocacy, which is: People do things for their reasons, not yours. The Harris government is clearly motivated not by concern for the issues I mentioned but by their own

desire for power. Their grab for power, through Bill 103, I understand not only denies our democratic and constitutional rights but flies in the face of national and international accord.

In this respect, for those of you who missed it, I would like to read from an article by Joell Vanderwagen, a writer and planning consultant, which appeared in the Toronto Star on January 21, 1997:

"Ontario's plan to arbitrarily eliminate local governments in Toronto, Scarborough, North York, Etobicoke, York and East York may violate not only local sensibilities, but it also runs counter to an international agreement signed by the government of Canada."

"Last June, Canada participated in the UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, and signed a 241-paragraph document titled The Habitat Agenda: Goals and Principles, Commitments and Global Plan of Action.

"The agenda addressed two themes: adequate shelter for all, and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world. In its preamble, the agenda notes that:

"Democracy, respect for human rights, transparent, representative and accountable government and administration in all sectors of society, as well as effective participation by civil society are indispensable foundations for the realization of sustainable development."

Representatives of national governments and local authorities from around the world met to grapple with these problems.

"The resulting agreement recognizes that the quality of the administrative and decision-making structures of local government are intrinsic to our collective ability to respond to these challenges.

"The very first principle set out in chapter IV, section D" — of the Habitat statement — "calls for decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their associations or networks.

"It says that economically, socially and environmentally sound human settlements can best be achieved through 'effective decentralization of responsibilities, policy management, decision-making authority and sufficient resources, including revenue collection authority, to local authorities closest to and most representative of their constituencies....'"

That's quite a mouthful. The key words for me are "effective decentralization...to local authorities."

Mr Vanderwagen goes on to say:

"Here in Ontario, the government's unilateral actions to combine six large municipalities with six different sets of zoning bylaws, as well as public health, parking and noise regulations (to name only a few items) into one megacity will produce neither accessibility of local government nor efficiency of regional management.

In fact, he states that "what is happening here could be called an international disgrace and an international concern.

"The UN has called Toronto the most ethnically diverse city in the world, and survey after survey have listed it as one of the most livable communities. This high quality of life cannot be separated from its long tradition of humane and efficient local democracy."

To recap, Harris's Bill 103, and similar plans for amalgamation across the province, to me would seem to be in direct violation of the international accord, Habitat II, signed by the government of Canada less than nine months ago.

Mr Vanderwagen suggests that, "With the Habitat II agreement firmly in hand, Toronto citizens have every reason to appeal to the government of Canada and the United Nations."

That's the end of the article. Thank you, Mr Vanderwagen.

I have no doubt someone will act on his suggestion if the Harris government continues to ignore local sensibilities and ram through Bill 103.

Closer to home, of course, Clayton Ruby and Paul Copeland have offered to defend, free of charge, any citizen or group of citizens who wish to challenge the legality of Bill 103. They are confident of success.

This is very reassuring, unless, of course, Mike Harris and his government are even now drafting legislation to place the Ontario judicial system under trusteeship.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

**The Chair:** We have about three minutes for questions from the government caucus, Mrs Munro and then Mr Gilchrist.

**Mrs Munro:** I'm sorry, I had to step out and speak to one of the other presenters.

**Ms Watson:** I'm sorry. I'm very hard of hearing and I didn't wear my hearing aid today, so this might be a problem.

**Mrs Munro:** I merely wanted to apologize for missing the opening statements that you made simply because I was outside speaking to an earlier presenter.

I really wanted to comment on the part in your presentation where you refer to the notion that Toronto is one of the most livable cities in the world. The question comes to mind that Toronto, of course, has been growing since the early 19th century. In that almost 200 years we have seen a number of changes in terms of the political configuration of the area as well as amalgamations. Throughout that whole period of time, people have always with a great deal of vibrancy been able to create neighbourhoods and quality of life.

I just wondered if you could comment for us on how you see the continual growth that we've seen in the Toronto area matched with the vibrancy of those communities and neighbourhoods. Can you offer us any comment on how we've managed to keep that going despite all these amalgamations and growth changes?

**Ms Watson:** My goodness, no, I guess I can't. I'm really sorry. I think what you've said is just very impressive. There has always been growth and there has always been change; you're quite right. I think this comes from the people, it comes from communities, it comes from ideas, from city planners, from civil society, from residential groups and things like that. I don't think it comes from the top down. Is that what you asked me?

**Mrs Munro:** Yes, I guess so. I also wanted you to see the fact that we have sustained this civility that you've referred to and the community life despite all that growth. We've managed to bring those two things together. That was really what I wanted you to comment on, which you did.

**Ms Watson:** I think it's done by small communities. I don't think it's done by a large city per se. It's done by small communities which integrate, but not completely, and keep their own personalities, their own ethnicity — I think that's the word. As a lot of people here have said, we are a city of communities, not just one huge great megacity. We're not just one huge great thing that can be governed by just one overruling government. I don't believe that at all. By keeping our culture, our colour, our smaller communities and our local governments, who understand these smaller communities, I think that's how we're able to do it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Watson, for your presentation today.

#### JAMIE SMITH

**The Chair:** Would Jamie Smith please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Smith. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jamie Smith:** Mr Chairman, honourable members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity of letting me address you this afternoon. My name's Jamie Smith and I'm speaking as a private citizen against Bill 103.

I was actively involved in opposing this bill very shortly after it was announced, distributing literature and speaking at a public forum at city hall. This happened weeks before Citizens for Local Democracy had its first meeting. I mention this not in self-congratulation but in an attempt to dispel the myth that the anti-megacity fervour has all been whipped up by one man or by one group. There are literally hundreds of people who, like me, are neither municipal employees afraid of losing their jobs nor people jumping on a rolling bandwagon. I know there are hundreds of people because I've seen them in the flesh.

I don't propose to address the trusteeship or transitional team as mentioned in this bill. I think these aspects have been dealt with pretty thoroughly by other people. I find it instructive to take a look at what this city would have been like if the megacity had been formed 30 years ago.

The megacity as proposed will have roughly the same political makeup and demographic makeup as present-day Metro council in terms of demographics and political attitudes. There are a number of issues on which the city of Toronto and Metro have disagreed over the years. If we had had a megacity instead of small city governments, we would today have a Spadina Expressway; we would have subways running uncovered through city ravines; we would have jets at the island airport; we would not have mixed-income subsidized housing, which seems to be the only kind that works in this city; we would have no island community; we would probably have no sidewalk vendors on Dundas and Spadina.

**1700**

I have a great deal of problems with Bill 104 as well, but I realize this is not the correct forum to address those issues.

One of the reasons I'm more upset about Bill 103 than Bill 104 is that, unlike Bill 104, I believe Bill 103 is essentially irreversible. The mayor of Philadelphia has said that the only way to solve that city's inner-city

problems would be to establish local governments. Unfortunately, the majority on Philadelphia city council is unwilling to let the urban area go. The suburban politicians have a majority on council; they would be unwilling to allow a separate government to be set up. I fear this would be the same situation in Toronto, even if we were able to get rid of this government and put in a government that is more receptive to the idea of local democracy.

The Premier said at a Star forum before the election, "Metro has to go." This legislation has been justified as his attempt to fulfil that promise. From where I sit, Metro isn't going; Metro is staying. It's getting a new name and more power, but Metro is to remain. What is going are the local city governments, which are the only level, as far as I can see, at which government works in this country in terms of delivering services to the people.

Another function of the megacity legislation is to pit groups of people directly against each other. This is an aspect of Bill 104 — I appreciate it — but by downloading welfare on to municipalities, you're pitting ratepayers against welfare recipients. Ratepayers are never more conservative than when they see themselves as ratepayers. The idea is that it's justified by saying the cost of welfare has gone down in recent years and should continue to do so. I see this as a euphemism for saying, "We, the Tories, are willing to be ruthless with welfare recipients, and if you people are willing to be as ruthless as we are, you won't have high costs either."

Urban groups are thrown into the same arena with suburban groups. They're two essentially different cultures here with different values. They have different expectations from the police force: local policing versus quick response. Planning: Mixed use doesn't fly in suburban Toronto; it's the only way to run things in downtown Toronto. It pits large towns versus small towns. Small towns don't have an appreciable welfare load, nor do they have public transit.

By finding that Toronto is currently in a boom and saying that the province is currently in a boom and that extra money is available to help out the cities, Mr Eves is reducing cities to the status of panhandlers who can expect a few handouts if times are good and if the province is feeling generous.

The main problem with the megacity, though, is the question of access. I recently had the necessity to address city council or try to work through city council around a live-work zoning application in Parkdale. At Toronto city council there are 17 members. You need nine to get something passed. At the megacity you'll need 23. The problem is that a number of the 23 you're going to need are from Etobicoke or Scarborough. They're not going to understand the concept of inner-city needs; much harder and more difficult to bring them up to speed.

The island question was a case in point. The main problem that Metro politicians seemed to have with the island, as far as I could see, was the problem of mixed use. Planning in a suburban area is done with a map and a magic marker, drawing circles around areas, not looking at appropriate use and functions.

Toronto will probably continue to be a place where people will hold elevator doors open for each other even

if the megacity legislation passes. I can remember the 1950s, growing up in Toronto. It was referred to as the biggest small town in the world. It was also the fastest-growing metropolis in the North America.

Local government is going to be necessary for this city if it is to react quickly enough to avoid the pitfalls that have befallen other American cities, as opposed to reacting after the fact by crisis management, hiring more police, mega-projects to try to stimulate the local economy. I feel it's the ability to see little problems before they become big problems and deal with them that makes this city successful, and has done in my lifetime.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much. I guess this Philadelphia analogy is quite poignant in that the message there is that if you want to nurture and revitalize and make inner cities or downtown cores work, maybe the best thing is to have a government that pays attention to the particular, to the small things, rather than have a massive government that has so many responsibilities to look at that it will forget the attention needed to the core.

**Mr Smith:** That's basically my point, yes. I don't know a great deal about the Philadelphia situation. I'm getting most of my information from a letter to the editor in the paper a month and a half ago from a Canadian who was working down there as a social worker.

**Mr Colle:** As you know, what happened in Chicago is that with the megacity concept introduced there, over a million people have left Chicago since the introduction of that kind of format.

**Mr Smith:** Exactly. Toronto must be one of the few cities in North America, if not the only one, where condos are being built in the downtown core and people who are wealthy enough to be able to afford to live wherever they want are choosing to live downtown. It's certainly not happening in any other major North American city that I'm aware of.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Smith, for making your presentation today.

#### MADELEINE FLEMING

**The Chair:** Would Madeleine Fleming please come forward. Good afternoon, Ms Fleming, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Madeleine Fleming:** Thank you very much. I appreciate the opportunity to speak today to the standing committee on general government conducting hearings on Bill 103. I support unification of six municipalities into a single city because it's time to leave behind seven competing governments, each with its own planning, roads and parks departments and the confusion created over who does what. Many agree that the status quo is no longer an option. I firmly believe and trust that this government, through unifying Toronto, will save money, remove barriers to growth and investment, eliminate confusing and often contradictory bylaws and regulations, and improve the quality of services we now receive.

We can draw examples of growth and prosperity from the private profit sector, which has successfully undergone streamlining and downsizing. Many in the non-profit sector as well are doing more with less. Mayor Barbara Hall, in her recent publication, *The State of the*

City, speaks to efficiencies obtained through "combining 13 different departments into four units and reducing senior management from 81 to 41 and serve the public with more efficiency."

1710

I am here today, however, to speak more about what I see going on in Toronto's neighbourhoods and specifically the Beaches area where I live. The Beach area is an old-established neighbourhood in the east end of Toronto. I feel it will always be there. Most of us who live there have a strong attachment to our local thriving community, whether we have lived there for five years or 60 years.

The city of Toronto is comprised of many such neighbourhoods where residents feel a sense of pride for what they share in common or accomplish, whether it be summer festivals, sidewalk cafes and restaurants that draw large tourist crowds, or unique shopping. Some are defined through ethnic mix, such as Greektown on the Danforth. Other neighbourhoods are defined by location, such as High Park or the Annex. They have been here for many, many years and will continue to thrive.

People identify with these areas no matter what municipal structure dictates. People, not the government, define their communities. No one is suggesting we rename our neighbourhoods and streets through unification. I disagree wholeheartedly with the critics who speak to the fact that we will lose our identities. Areas like the Beaches, the Annex, Mimico and Rexdale will be there for many, many years to come.

Some of the concerns I had earlier on with unification had to do with the implementation plan, not the concept, and our relationship to the greater Toronto area. I recognize that amalgamating seven local governments into a single-tiered city is not without its difficulties. However, I wanted to be convinced that the Harris government would put together a plan to make the transition work. I have now read a great deal of literature from the Harris government on the Metro and GTA restructuring process and the implementation period, which will be led by an implementation team.

I feel that they have dispelled my uneasiness. In fact, I applaud this government for having the courage to set the stage for unification and to do what countless reports have urged for 30 years. I am reassured by the fact that a team will be in place to face the challenge ahead and guide the way for a streamlined government responsive to local needs.

By reading the literature we see that the transition will be appointing five to eight people who will be carefully selected, based on their background knowledge in municipal administration and expertise from the private profit sector, who have successfully undergone the challenge of downsizing and restructuring. The team will be set up to deal with specific issues and look at eliminating duplication and improving service quality through putting in place neighbourhood councils that will influence local decisions on the services to be delivered locally. The GTA issue that the Golden task force touched on will also be part of the coordination of the greater Toronto area. What we will now have is a streamlined, well-oiled machine.

I think the critics are wrong and I think that we can deliver a better product for less, not just reshuffle the deck.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

*Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order. Ladies and gentlemen, that's not going to be tolerated. As soon as someone comes forward with a different view, you're not going to hoot and holler. People have the right to express their opinions without being shouted down or made to feel awkward.

**Mr Silipo:** Thank you, Ms Fleming. I have the honour of questioning the first person who has sat before us expressing support for what the government is doing. We know that there will be others, so I don't —

**Mr Parker:** Since Alan Tonks.

**Mr Silipo:** Since Alan Tonks; I stand corrected.

**The Chair:** Order, please. Mr Silipo has the floor.

**Mr Silipo:** The first non-politician who is here, although I note that you have a small political responsibility in terms of your presidency of the Beaches-Woodbine PC Riding Association. I say that only for the record because there clearly have been other members of the Tory party who have sat in that chair and said they are opposed to what the government is doing.

I want to go back to a couple of points that you made in your brief. You talked about "this government having the courage to set the stage for unification and to do what countless reports have urged for 30 years." I've looked at some of those reports. We've talked about a number of those reports. I can't find any of those reports that actually say that unification is a good thing, going back 30 years, as you say. Maybe we're reading different reports.

**Ms Fleming:** I have not read all the literature. What I have done is gather information from sources that I believe are true.

**Mr Silipo:** Okay. I'm not surprised you would believe other sources rather than me. That's fine. Could I just ask you your understanding, as a member, and I have to presume and correct me if I'm wrong, somewhat active in the last election, of the promise that was made by Mr Harris with respect to the future of Metro Toronto and the GTA? Because we've heard, of course, different accounts here. Joyce Trimmer, as you know, who chaired a task force, has a very specific understanding of what was promised and not promised, and I'd just be interested in your sense, as an activist in the Conservative party, of the promise that was made.

**Ms Fleming:** My sense of the promise has more to do with cost-effectiveness, decreasing the deficit, making a more efficient government. To me, this speaks to those promises.

**Mr Silipo:** So the fact that the Trimmer task force, which said that, yes, there would be changes within Metropolitan Toronto but that they would be done on the basis of eliminating the upper tier at Metro and maintaining the local level, the report that was signed on to by, among others, Al Leach and a number of others who are now members of the government, wasn't an issue in your mind? That wasn't in fact what the promise was?

**Ms Fleming:** I, quite frankly, would prefer speaking to what the issues are today rather than what they were three years ago.

**Mr Silipo:** Okay. Fair enough. That's your prerogative. This notion that this is something that needs to be done: Could you talk to us, please, a little bit about why you believe it needs to be done, or do you believe it needs to be done, in the way in which the government is doing it? Clearly, as I'm sure you know, people who are opposed to this are saying to us that they don't like what's happening, but they also don't like, particularly, the way in which the government is doing it. If this is such a good idea, what's the rush in getting it done this way and getting it done now? Why is the government not able to go out and convince people it's such a good idea in a process of discussion?

**Ms Fleming:** I think the public education process has to be in place. It's beginning. A lot of work has been accomplished in a very short period of time. I, myself, have had to rush to get sufficient time to read the copious amounts of information that are out there. The education process by the provincial government now is beginning to work out all the details with the public so that they will be better informed, so they get an idea of the pros, not just the cons. I think once the public does hear about the careful planning strategies that have gone into place, they will also be convinced this is the best avenue.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Silipo and thank you, Ms Fleming, for coming forward to make your presentation this afternoon.

1720

#### JEFF SHARPE

**The Chair:** Would Jeff Sharpe please come forward? Good afternoon, Mr Sharpe. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jeff Sharpe:** I'm in support of amalgamation. I feel it's very important. There are much-needed changes that have to take place today. It's evident that we're overgoverned. An issue that I'd like to address is, if you look at Metro council, for example, they have a chairperson but the individual isn't democratically elected by the community. They're elected by the council itself.

If I vote for a provincial party, say, for example, for the PCs, or whichever party it is, I vote for Michael Harris. If I was ever going to vote, I'd vote for Michael Harris, not a backbencher to represent my concerns, so I feel that is democratic. If somebody else is appointed, I don't really feel that's democratic. That's just an opinion.

The issues I'd really like to address are around social assistance, for one. Just looking around us today, we see that we have the working poor. Homelessness is increasing. Poverty is increasing. Child poverty is increasing. These issues really have to be addressed.

You start asking, why is this? Why does this happen? When we start to look back, we realize that our welfare system is broke, as you'd call it. Why is that? I myself took an initiative — because it is a concern; it's what I believe in — to look into why this is actually really going on. In a sense it's because I care. This is me. This is who I am.

I started to realize that a lot of people on social assistance want to work, and there are a lot of people with high skills who are on social assistance. The way the system is structured today, if they want to go out and

find meaningful employment and get off the system, it seems like they're penalized for doing so. So you say, why would that be? How the government turns around and looks at it today is that it says, "We should help these people; give them a hand up and not a handout." "This is great. That's exactly what we want. We want jobs, not welfare. Thank you for helping us and so on, but can you help us so that we can help ourselves." This is what people really want.

But when you look at it, you say, let's look at the underground economy. If you start putting up barriers that trap people in the system, then you have temporary agencies. We call them sweat shops. What happens is that people's labour becomes exploited. Why? Because they can't even afford a bus ticket to go look for a job. They have these people waiting for them: "Oh, yes, we'll take you there." So what happens is they take half their wages. So what happens is you start taking these pools, these resources of cheap labour and you start displacing well-paid workers.

It's quite evident that there are going to be record profits, but what happens is you don't have a consumer. It's the consumer who buys the products. So what happens is now we don't have a consumer. We all become the working poor and there's poverty and so on. It's apparent that this isn't good for society. It breaks down. It's broke and it needs to be fixed.

We are a Christian nation. We're built on the principles of God. What is that? It's a caring, decent society: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Should we focus on the dollar? Is this what we should be focusing on or should we be focusing on humanity for one another? So we start focusing on humanity for one another and we say it's taking care of the individual's needs. That's what really matters. There are a lot of people out there today who say: "Nobody really cares. Society doesn't care. They've turned their backs on us. They don't care." That's not 100% the case. I'm sure there are some people out there who still do. If we're built upon these principles of God, should we not seek the benefit of one another instead of profit?

Toronto is such a great city which the world does envy. We realize too that it's also a compassionate city. I think these are the values we should concentrate on.

When I see the approach the government is currently taking, I do support it, because it takes the ability and gives it directly back to the people, to say: "Okay, you develop your programs. You tell us. Now we know that we've got to work with you. You show us what's going on. Tell us. We want to listen." I feel that's a positive approach. What happens is that you start hearing the concerns. People tell you, "This is what's going on; this is the kind of help we need," and so on, and then we can start to build from there.

I think I should just leave it at that for now.

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Sharpe, the thesis has been presented in most of these hearings thus far that a new, unified city will be completely incapable of working because the human networks will fail. People will suddenly stop behaving the way they have in terms of being volunteers in any type of artistic or social agency or organization. We're going to regress. That's the basic thesis we have

been getting. You present the opposite of that. Can you structure a response that would reassure people in the public who aren't here that a new, unified city can work just as effectively in terms of the human relationships, the human networks that were there before, and that we're simply getting rid of some municipal boundary lines?

**Mr Sharpe:** I assume from what you say that we'll make the city tick. It's a caring society. You have to start focusing on what is most important in society. It says, "Seek another man's wealth and not your own." These are very important values. We have young people today who need work. What do we do? Do we invest in this and this? No. We invest in young people today.

What happens as soon as you see that is barriers. We do have freedoms, but one does not take their freedom to take another person's freedom away. That's not correct. If a person uses their freedom and their rights to enhance and further another person's freedom and rights, this creates unity. This takes down the barriers.

We live in a multicultural society as well so we don't show discrimination between race, colour or creed and so on. You look at the value of the person. I think this is what we should be concentrating on to bring unity and this is what we should be investing in.

**Mr Hastings:** So you do not see the amalgamated, unified city preventing the sort of theme you are presenting?

**Mr Sharpe:** Certainly not.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Sharpe, for coming forward this afternoon and making your presentation.

#### SCOT BLYTHE

**The Chair:** Would Scot Blythe come forward, please. Good afternoon, Mr Blythe, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Scot Blythe:** I am grateful to have this opportunity to speak. For the record, I am a writer, editor, researcher and academic. I have worked for various magazines and newspapers and many local institutions, frequently on issues of taxation and governance. I know my Ontario history and I know my Toronto history well. More than that, I am a proud resident of Toronto, and I am here to defend my city and my way of life.

To begin, I should like to recall to this committee the words of a government inquiry delivered at a time when all things big were in vogue: when the Eaton Centre was going to gobble up old city hall; St. James Town threatened to expand from Bloor Street all the way to the waterfront; and Union Station was to go under the wrecker's ball. The inquiry was the Ontario committee on taxation, the Smith committee, and it enjoined the province in 1967 with the following words:

"The province has a constitutional responsibility for the structure of municipal and school authorities. It has an even deeper responsibility to foster, through local institutions, the democratic values we cherish."

That is the Ontario I grew up in. I'm not sure any more if that Ontario has endured.

I have spent half my life in Toronto now, almost all of it in what is now often called the Garrison Common, which includes better-known neighbourhoods such as

Little Italy, Rua Acores and Queen West. My immediate world is defined by College, Ossington, Dufferin and Queen. My larger world is bounded by the Humber River, Bloor Street, the waterfront and Yonge Street. I don't travel much outside those boundaries. I have little need to do so, and besides, to me it would be like travelling to a foreign country.

Many people argue that Metropolitan Toronto is one big city. Borscht. It's not. Even the city of Toronto isn't a unified whole. The west end, the immigrant quarter where I live, is different from the east end, and both are different from the north. I wouldn't feel at home in either, just as I never felt at home during my one year in the city of York.

This may sound parochial, but remember, the tradition of local government begins with parishes. The idea of a small, self-governing place, together with New England-style town hall meetings, is at the root of local government.

At the beginnings of this province, Ontario was divided into four and later eight judicial districts, with government by appointed justices of the peace. There was certainly order but there was no democratic government as we would understand it. The incorporation of the city of Toronto in 1834 and later the 1837 rebellion led to local self-government across this province. In fact, Lord Durham thought that was the most pressing task.

Communities are not shaped just by economic forces. They rest on traditions and historical memories which serve to knit disparate neighbourhoods into a workable whole. Add in a vigilant citizenry and you will forge a community that works. Size and common traditions are essential considerations. Make a city too big and it won't work, because city hall and the school board become as distant as Queen's Park or Parliament Hill, and indifference and apathy rule.

Let me relate an anecdote. During the Second World War, with many residents working full-time in the munitions factories, and social life far from normal, the Toronto Board of Education sought to provide an outlet by creating community centres. They were so successful that the city promptly took them over. The point is this: If you keep things small enough and accessible, people will participate.

### 1730

I came to Toronto to go to university. Really I just wanted to be in Toronto. I grew up in Sarnia, a small industrial city of about 60,000 people that forms a triangle, with London and Windsor at each end. As you might know, for that area the cultural metropolis, as it were, is Detroit. People forget that the Detroit area is still the fifth- or sixth-largest market in the US. I often went there for concerts and basketball games, but after travelling down a gutted Woodward Ave, for all the world looking like Beirut, I was always glad to be back on the Canadian side.

Detroit manifestly does not work. Interestingly it was once a megacity of two million people. Now it has fewer than a million. It has many fine neighbourhoods of the kinds of Victorian houses that Torontonians pay dearly for. No one wants them in Detroit. The élites brag about how long it's been since they were last downtown, and

those fine houses get torched as a perverse way of celebrating Halloween. By the way, did I mention that Detroit has one of the finest expressway systems in the world, with all the roads meeting up in a downtown where few work and no one wants to live? It has the expressway network that Metro dreamed of in the 1960s.

I had difficulties fathoming the size of Toronto when I first arrived here. I once undertook a journey to see how far I could walk in a half-hour. From the university I got to Ossington Avenue in the west; I got to Casa Loma in the north. Those were the human limits of my city. Once, when I had to take a bus up Keele Street to get to a conference at York University, it dawned on me that Metro isn't one city; it's a series of villages the size of Sarnia. If you add it up, Metro has about 30 Sarnias in it.

Let me add that the ward in which I live, with its municipal councillor and its school board trustee, is also about the size of Sarnia. Size, as I've said, is important. I know very well where I live. I have a sense of place. I know my universe, I know what effect I can have and I know whom to turn to.

The city of Toronto works because it is still small enough that neighbourhood associations can form and they can influence city hall and the school board.

When the social engineers of the province and Metro, with their minions in the city of Toronto, proposed massive urban redevelopment, the demolition of city hall and a spaghetti of expressways, the neighbourhoods of Toronto rebelled and were able to convince city council to change its mind and oppose the neat pigeonhole mentality of Metro. Small neighbourhood groups won that fight, that defended their way of life against the property developers, the boosters, the visionaries who proposed to save the city of Toronto by destroying it.

The newspapers weren't on their side. When the Eaton Centre project that was going to raze the old city hall to create a mega-block went down, the Toronto Star lamented that Toronto had lost its chance to be a world-class city — in 1968.

Bill 103 is an unwanted and unneeded experiment in social engineering. It assumes that Metro Toronto has a homogeneous population, and if it doesn't, the new Metro council will work to create it. I'm sorry, I've never believed that one size fits all. In fact, I'm a tall person, I'm big, and the so-called free market with its vaunted efficiencies and customer service has never been able to meet my needs very well.

If you choose to create a megacity, you will get a mega-bureaucracy that works the same way: once size fits all, a mega-bureaucracy like Brasilia, Brazil's capital city, a sterile, unlivable and forbidding place but one that fits into all the neat bureaucratic pigeonholes.

Contrast that with Rotterdam. It too has GTA-like problems of economic development. Instead of creating a megacity, however, Rotterdam and its surrounding suburbs petitioned the Dutch Legislature to create an upper-tier structure for the whole region. To make it work, the city of Rotterdam, which is only slightly larger than the city of Toronto, voted to dissolve itself into 10 cities to bring government closer to the people.

The essence of a civil society, of a society that works, is the capacity of citizens and the institutions they have created to work on their behalf, to solve problems quickly. When the Toronto Board of Education discovered that teenage mothers were spelling each other off to mind their children in a high school bathroom, the board created a day care centre so that teenage mothers could continue their education while their children were being properly looked after.

Compare that to the federal government. Brian Mulroney promised a national program to end child poverty in 1988 and signed the UN convention. Only now are the federal and provincial social services ministers getting around to redeeming that promise — after how many children have fallen through the cracks? The local response, through these times of travail for poor families: Without much niggling, when the Toronto Board of Education and the Toronto Board of Health first glimpsed this awful recession, they immediately set up a school food program to ensure that hunger did not impede learning. I dare any government to act as fast as these two local institutions did.

If you keep it small, you can make informal arrangements. You can act fast. If you make it big, then you have to follow rules. I don't want to dish bureaucrats, but I must remind you of the point of bureaucracy, particularly mega-bureaucracy. As organizations come to administer more things, they become more complex. They have to invent rules and procedures and levels of decision-making to avoid the appearance of favouritism and especially to avoid scandal.

So what gets done? The government makes a promise and, as with child poverty, it takes 10 years to fulfil it.

It has been argued that most services in Metro are already amalgamated. Let's be careful about that argument. What are the services that have been amalgamated? Police, ambulance, long-term care, general welfare assistance, public housing, public transit and arterial roads. Metro serves as an agent of the province. These are services which the province provides and which it has chosen to decentralize. After all, cities don't set their own Criminal Code, don't regulate the health system, don't fix the standards of social assistance. The services that are already amalgamated in Metro could just as well be provided across the GTA by the appropriate GTA-wide bodies. Why should these services stop at Steeles Ave or Etobicoke Creek?

Decentralization of the services the province has promised to provide is not the same as local government. Local government is a response to the needs of people. It involves the siting of a school, the regulation of parking, the opening hours of public institutions. It involves infill housing, the zoning for dance clubs and sports bars, the construction of sidewalks. It involves all the things that don't fit into neat pigeonholes, all the things for which one size does not fit all. Local governments serve a mosaic of neighbourhoods; they do not dish out services from some vast melting-pot whose ingredients are economies of scale, outsourcing, re-engineering and voice mail.

**The Chair:** Mr Blythe, sorry to interrupt, but you're beyond your allotted time. Could you wrap up quickly, please.

**Mr Blythe:** This bill does not have the consent of the people. This bill does not have the consent of the people who make this city work. I urge you to withdraw this bill and start over again. If you do not withdraw this bill, you will not be able to put Humpty-Dumpty together again, and that would be a sad legacy not just for the people of Toronto but for the people of Ontario.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation today.

### MARJALEENA REPO

**The Chair:** Would Marjaleena Repo please come forward. Good afternoon. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Marjaleena Repo:** Thank you. I have a four-page supportive document that I'm going to leave with the clerk. My name is Marjaleena Repo. I arrived from Finland in 1960 and I lived in Toronto until 1973, during which time I was active in this city's cultural, political, educational and social affairs. Then in 1993, after two decades in the west, I returned to live and work in Toronto. I'm the national organizer for Citizens Concerned About Free Trade, a national non-partisan organization dedicated to an economically and politically independent, prosperous and sovereign Canada, but this presentation is on behalf of myself as a citizen.

In the mid- and late 1960s I participated in the fight against a destructive mega-project in Toronto: urban renewal in working-class areas. It was the residents of Trefann Court in the old Cabbagetown with whom I worked who put an end to a poorly thought out project that consisted of advanced rhetoric about improving the lives of people and beautifying the city, and the backward practice of expropriating working-class homes, bulldozing them and replacing them with born-to-be-slums high-rise public housing. It was the residents of Trefann, building on the experiences of the resisting residents of Alexandra Park and Don Mount who exposed the true nature of slum clearance and were able to convince those in power that urban "removal," which was the correct term, was the wrong way to go. The big clearance projects hit the dust after Trefann. In a small way I take credit for that.

The other significant mega-projects I have participated in were Mr Mulroney's 1987 free trade agreement with the United States and the Charlottetown constitutional amendment of 1992. In the case of the free trade agreement, which has since been rolled into NAFTA with the federal Liberals' approval and against their explicit 1993 election promises to cancel both if they could not be renegotiated, the free trade agreement was foisted on resisting Canadians by the Conservative Party and its leader, who up to that time had been unequivocally opposed to continental free trade.

**1740**

Many will remember Mr Mulroney's solemn assurances, echoed by all except one federal Conservative leadership contestant in 1983, that he would under no circumstances consider free trade with the US, and this is one of the famous quotes:

"Free trade was decided on in an election in 1911. It affects Canadian sovereignty and we will have none of it, not during leadership campaigns nor at any other time."

Thus deceiving the voters, the Tories won the federal election in 1984 and at once proceeded to negotiate a bilateral trade deal with the United States for which it had no mandate.

In the 1988 election, which Mulroney declared to be a "referendum on free trade," only 43% endorsed his policies and 57% voted against them, yet Mr Mulroney, blatantly disregarding people's wishes, went ahead and, using closure, rammed the agreement through the House of Commons, where he had a majority of seats.

Emboldened by his re-election, Brian Mulroney proceeded with another mega-project, that of fundamentally changing the Canadian Constitution so as to weaken an already feeble central government. Confident that he could sell his constitutional amendments to Canadians, he allowed for a referendum on the Charlottetown accord. After all, why worry, as the combined political, economic, cultural and media élites, including even the leadership of native and labour organizations, signed up to support the Mulroney plan to dismantle the central government.

But he and the others did not count on the intelligence and energy of Canadians who, against overwhelming odds and lacking the mega-bucks available to the government's supporters, informed themselves of the meaning of the proposed changes to the Constitution and rallied to defeat what was supposed to have been a shoo-in. The rest is history that some would prefer to forget, and in any case resist learning from.

Because of their undemocratic and heavy-handed rule, the Conservatives suffered an unprecedented defeat in 1993 when the governing party was reduced to two seats, a catastrophic fall from 211 in 1984 and 169 in 1988. Few people think that the Progressive Conservatives will recover soon from the wrath of Canadians whom they bullied and lied to for eight years. Those who have forgotten or haven't learned the lessons are bound to, as the famous saying goes, relive history. By the way, with proportional representation, Mulroney would have had 147 and 127 seats respectively, which would have doomed the free trade agreement in 1988.

Closer to home, Ontario's Conservatives today would have only 58 seats, not 82, the opposition parties could outvote them with their combined 67 seats and we wouldn't be here today. This is the way real democracy should work. That is why proportional representation of some kind must be on every democrat's agenda.

There is another clear connection to the so-called free trade agreement in the amalgamation proposal. People are asking: "Why is the amalgamation being done? Why such a drastic and sudden change, and why now?" So far there have been no meaningful answers from the government beyond a repetitious, "We've got to do it."

The Minister of Municipal Affairs himself, Mr Leach, attempts to justify the amalgamation plan by referring to globalization. In his February 3 speech he speaks of amalgamation removing "barriers to growth and investment" and helping "to create jobs" and he refers to the "relentless competition from the global marketplace," all

familiar language from Mulroney's free trade campaign. He points out that "Toronto is not growing as fast as the cities we compete against for jobs and business." He has noticed that "jobs are not being created as quickly" and that "instead of coming here, businesses and industries are leaving this area."

It is clear that Mr Leach is describing the after-effects of the free trade agreement and NAFTA, the decimation of the manufacturing sector in the industrial heartland of Canada, which is Ontario and Quebec, by these agreements, and perhaps he even knows that already by January 1992 half a million good jobs were lost in Canada, with plants picking up and leaving for the southern non-unionized, lower-or-no-taxes states and for Mexico, leaving behind factories turned into parking lots and rubble. Only two years into the free trade agreement, Canada lost 23.1% of its manufacturing sector — and guess where most of it was: in Ontario — while the United States at the same time only lost 6.3%. The loss of industry and jobs of course has an immediate effect on the tax base: When people don't work, they and their employers don't pay taxes. It is as simple as that.

This is what the so-called globalization has meant for Canada, and there is no end in sight for the bleeding of Ontario and its jewel of a city, Toronto, if the free trade agreements are not cancelled, utilizing the cancellation clauses in the free trade agreement and NAFTA. These are articles 2106 and 2205, which provide for either or any country abrogating the treaties by giving six months' notice to the others, so it can be done.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs doesn't name the real problem, so-called free trade, and he has a totally inappropriate solution to the globalization we have already experienced. He advocates the forceful and undemocratic abolition of local governments. It's like a doctor meeting up with a seriously ill patient, and without so much as doing an examination, orders the amputation of both legs. We would consider this doctor a murderous quack.

Isn't this exactly the case with Bill 103 and its proponents? If you don't understand the problem, how can you come up with a solution? It looks like the minister wants more of the same: more cutbacks, more job losses, less tax, less revenue, in the vain hope that investment would find its way into Ontario, to take advantage of the desperation of our citizens to find work that the free trade agreements in more ways than one stole from them. The minister is paving the way for the further Third-Worldization of his province.

The weasel words of "globalization," "efficiency," "savings to taxpayers," "re-engineering government" and the empty and horribly familiar promises of "jobs, jobs, jobs," all through the miracle of civic amputation, will not do for a moment for the intelligent and thoughtful Ontarians and Torontonians who have lived through a decade of assaults on them and their families and communities. They don't want their democratic participation in their local governments re-engineered in the name of globalization by a provincial government barking up the wrong tree and unable to learn the lessons of recent history.

In conclusion I recommend to the Ontario government that it find the right tree to bark up and put pressure on the federal government to cancel the free trade agreement; leave the municipalities alone, the problems are not there; and introduce proportional representation in Ontario so that the citizens can have some real accountability from their governments. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentation. You've effectively exhausted all of your time.

### KIM STOREY

**The Chair:** Would Kim Storey please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Kim Storey:** I'm very happy to have this opportunity to speak. I originally came from Chatham, in Kent county, but I've lived in Toronto for 25 years now, where I found my vocation as an architect and an urbanist and have been thrilled to be able to live my life with my family in this city.

I'm sure you've heard many arguments against the megacity proposal on Bill 103, so I don't want to talk about facts and figures because I'm sure you've heard them all. I really want to talk about just the appeal to have you listen to what you've been hearing, because I think it's a huge waste of this energy if it isn't put to productive use. It has been such an amazing process for me to see the groundswell of community support in this city, how they've come up week after week.

I organized a meeting at the end of October, where I asked John Sewell and Colin Vaughan to come to speak to local architects in Holy Trinity Church because I was very concerned about what was happening. When they came, 70 people had shown up, and I was so depressed. I thought, "Maybe it will just happen and we'll just go out with a whimper," but in fact to see what has happened, to see the energy that's been generated in this city, not just in Toronto but all the other cities, has been amazing.

It's been a wonderful thing to watch, for me partly because of the work I've been doing in my practice for the last year — more like five years — which has really been talking about public space and how that is important to the institution of democracy in the city. I think the use of the civic square, where people actually speak together, where people have a dialogue, is far more important than sitting in front of your screen and bringing up your ideas and having them sent out by faxes in the middle of the night.

### 1750

I think the idea of democracy is not just the vote, not just the referendum, but actually the interchange of ideas and how people come to compromises and build communities of interest that work together. I think that is the tremendous potential and wealth that this government has missed. You could be working with us, together. Think of all the combined talents that are gathering every Monday night in Metropolitan United Church and tonight in St James Cathedral. If you saw these people, if you just listened to even 10 of their stories, what they do in their communities and how much energy they've put together just as a general principle in their lives — you're

ignoring the wealth of experience and interest and love for this city that exists here.

I could talk about the arguments about loving the city and loving the street life and loving everything that happens here, but in the end, the thing that amazes me the most is how this controversial, sort of adversarial relationship has been set up. It's really unpardonable in some cases because it's hard for people to find time to do these things, and yet they've all found the time. Although we've been assured time and time again through faxes, through news releases, that we will not be listened to, that no matter what we say and no matter how we vote, it will be going ahead, I'd just like to appeal to you: Please listen, because there are important things being said here, things that are coming from highly intelligent people and highly sensitive people and people who really, really care. Those are the people you should be appealing to when you're making changes in the city. These are the people who will make it work for you. Why go against all of this experience, all this wealth of affection and goodwill that exists for this city? I just don't understand it, because that is a resource that is being wasted and thrown away.

I'd like to speak in that sense about the local political scene here. I've found in my work through the Garrison Creek and the St George Street revitalization that there is a wonderful partnership that exists in this city between the local politicians, our bureaucracy and the people in the community. It is a balance that gets tipped one way and the next, but we all have a common ground that we operate from. We know what makes the city tick, we know what makes the city work well, and we all have the best of intentions for the city. I found that the things that worked best were when there was the best of dialogues between those three groups, not just the politicians and the bureaucrats deciding what was best, but when it came out of the community, out of the grass-roots action of ideas, when on things that were important to the community, the community actually rose up as a group, spoke about them, found the space to talk about them and then brought in the local politicians and the bureaucrats who all finally worked together.

The St George Street project was an excellent example of that, where there's a partnership between the public works department, the parks department, planning, urban design, the University of Toronto and all the citizen groups around it, where over a number of years something happened. People found ways of working together. I don't think that will ever be able to happen again in the megacity bureaucracy that will be springing up.

I'd like to compare what we have now to a quilt, where there are different sizes of patches of equal beauty and strengths, where Etobicoke has its beauty, Toronto has its beauty, York. We all have different things that are particular and special to us and we all make one beautiful quilt. I'd like to suggest that we're being covered over with a horse blanket. You are losing the mosaic and the beauty of this city by proposing what you're proposing.

I'd like to just end with a little joke that my father told in Chatham many years ago to the Rotarians about an argument that was going on between a doctor and an urban planner and a politician. They were talking about

what was the oldest profession. The doctor said — this is a Judeo-Christian story, I guess — “Well, Adam’s rib was removed to create Eve, so I guess medicine is the oldest professional act that happened.” The urban planner said, “No, there was the separation of light from darkness and earth from the firmament and actually planning from the chaos.” And the politician said, “Who the hell do you think created chaos?”

I would like to thank you very much for listening to me, and please, please listen to all the wonderful things that are being said.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Mr Colle, you have two minutes.

**Mr Colle:** I guess you can see the contrast here. You had the supporter of the megacity earlier and she mentioned that this was all about creating a streamlined, well-oiled machine, that that’s what the megacity is all about. You’re saying it’s a quilt of different people. How are the two ever going to come to meet to something that makes sense?

**Ms Storey:** I think people in the city were ready for change. I think people understood that things had to change in some ways. But first of all, the process has been the worst thing that has happened, where this adversarial role was placed — you’re either for or against. Certainly there may be some things that could be brought together and some things that should be left separate. I think there’s a size of the patches that makes sense. There’s a whole theory of urban space that talks about: What is the threshold size? Where does bureaucracy become too big? When is it too small?

My brother is a planner in Chatham who is going through exactly the same exercise but talking about urban and rural balances, and I think we’re going through very similar ones. In Chatham and Kent county they’re talking about going down to single tier but using it with very strong local governments. It’s not unlike what Morden Yolles was talking about in the Architect for Urban Values press conference several weeks ago where he said that as a structural engineer he finds six columns supporting a structure far more confidence-building than one. I kind of think of this big, teetering column trying to hold up this weight.

**Mr Colle:** But again, just to be even more fundamental, the proponents of the megacity are saying this is about creating a well-oiled machine. You’re talking about quills and space. You’ve got two different paradigms —

**Ms Storey:** No, I don’t think “well-oiled machine” means that these patches don’t work well. In fact, every government that’s been going through amalgamation strategies has fallen back to strong local governments as the most efficient way of delivering services and the most responsive and the most flexible.

**Mr Colle:** So you think that strong local government can also work like a streamlined, well-oiled machine?

**Ms Storey:** Yes, I think it can.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Storey, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### SHOSHANA FAINSILBER

**The Chair:** Would Shoshana Fainsilber please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

You have 10 minutes for a presentation. If there’s some time left at the end of your presentation, I’ll ask Mr Silipo to ask some questions.

**Ms Shoshana Fainsilber:** Okay. Hopefully not. Anyway, thank you for having me here. I’ve never done anything like this before and I’m feeling really nervous, but I guess I felt obligated to take up the opportunity to do this.

I came to Canada when I was seven years old. I grew up in the downtown core of Toronto among people of many cultures. At the age of 13, my family moved to North York, where I attended secondary school and university. As an adult, I returned to live in the city of Toronto because of its multicultural character, historical quality, sociability, accessibility to almost everything, excellent public transit and varied, beautiful neighbourhoods. I have felt proud, like many other people, to be living here.

When I first heard about Bill 103, I thought that it would not really affect me, that life would go on as usual. But as I heard and read more about it, I realized that all of what I have mentioned and more would be threatened.

It’s incredible that soon after Fortune magazine announces that Toronto has been voted the best city in the world to live in, the provincial government announces that Toronto has to undergo dramatic change, that Toronto needs to become more competitive. Toronto has received such glowing praises because it is a relatively safe, clean and vibrant place to live. It has proven itself to be effective in its ability to coordinate and balance its services and adapt to changes.

Having councils allows for representation. Local politicians have to be more accountable to their constituents, and issues can be dealt with in a more direct way. A megacity election will require bigger, more expensive campaigns which only a candidate with money will be able to afford. The various income levels of Metro will not be represented, which could lead to inequities of services among neighbourhoods.

#### 1800

Lumping together the six cities is ignoring the different strengths, needs and priorities of each one of them. This would threaten the quality of life that the citizens of those cities enjoy. Although one can say there’s always room for improvement, I’m sure a lot of people are reminded of the saying, “If it ain’t broke, why fix it?” The main question is “Why?”

The prevailing argument appears to be one of saving money, but after investigation, that does not seem to make sense. First of all, there is no hard evidence that money would be saved. No studies on the impact of restructuring of municipalities have confirmed that. On the contrary, previous amalgamations have proven to be costly. According to Professor Sancton, an expert on municipal government quoted in the *Globe and Mail*, reducing the number of organizations providing public services does not automatically reduce costs. “All other things being equal, one would expect large organizations to be more costly.” The government must have the same information as we do, yet they maintain that money will be saved.

It's hard to believe that a big, expensive bureaucracy that must oversee 2.3 million residents can save money. It seems more likely that money will be wasted as a whole new bureaucracy is created. Even Harris has been quoted as saying that bigger is not necessarily better. Local control can be more efficient because expenses are easier to monitor.

What is the real agenda of this government? It seems the purpose of amalgamation is to facilitate the downloading of social services on to the city. In order to save the amount targeted by this government, 4,500 workers would need to be laid off. This would be another blow to the struggling economy. How much would really be saved once severance packages are provided? There has already been a paring down of municipal services to remove inefficiencies; there does not need to be any more. The city of Toronto cut costs through the less costly means of attrition. I strongly believe in efficiency, but not in destroying structures that have been developed and refined over the years just for the sake of saving money, if any money will be saved.

By creating a state of upheaval and weakening the city, the province will be able to make budget cuts with less opposition. For the sake of cost saving, local programs and services will be dismantled. I work with unemployed young people to help them find jobs. As property taxes rise to deal with the downloading, businesses will suffer and leave the city. What kind of job prospects will these young people have? A future government will eventually have to deal with this and money will have to be spent to rebuild what had been destroyed. How much wastefulness, stress and turmoil would this cause?

As well as being concerned about the effects of amalgamation, I'm very concerned about the way the government introduced this bill, which was severely criticized by the legislative Speaker, as well as the process of amalgamation outlined in the bill. The idea of amalgamation was never included in the Common Sense Revolution. No one had any idea that by voting for the Conservatives, they were voting for such drastic changes to Toronto. Why was this not mentioned during the election campaign? Probably because no candidate would have been elected on this platform.

Bill 103 will remove the power of elected officials. It does not seem right that appointed trustees and transition team members will be paid by taxpayers and yet not represent taxpayers. Major decisions will be final, not approved by cabinet, and protected from any court challenges. The objective seems to be to make these changes swiftly and without any debate or input. The speed of these changes does not allow for adequate time to study the ramifications of such changes and to create constructive changes. Other alternatives, such as coordination of the GTA while preserving local councils, should be addressed now, not after an expensive bureaucracy has been created.

Many citizens are unaware of what is happening and why. One intelligent businessman I spoke with thought that all of Crombie's recommendations were in the bill. This issue deserves to be studied more carefully.

Another disconcerting matter is the government's response to the municipalities' recommendation for a

referendum and to the upcoming results. It shows a disregard for public opinion. It is an insult to the citizens of Metro to observe that the government has reluctantly agreed to wait and pass Bill 103 after the referendum. Personally, I feel this treatment is demoralizing and condescending. If the government had confidence in this bill, it would not fear that the majority of the people will not support it and would allow the referendum to be binding. Does Bill 103 pave the way for the Conservative government to privatize services and reward their friends with big contracts?

This process is causing some people to feel confused, helpless, passive, and for others to feel more determined that they will not accept autocratic behaviour from the government. My main concerns are the way this government is using its powers and what kind of society will be created out of a megacity bill. A society is not a business. It is not only based on the bottom line. The role of government is to balance the power of business with that of its citizens. If saving money is the only priority, then perhaps democracy costs too much money. Dictatorship is much cheaper but offers nothing to ensure that we will have a civil society.

When asked about Bill 103, I've heard people say, "Let's get rid of those politicians, those fat cats, those parasites." This bill triggers simplistic solutions, pitting one against the other.

My parents lived through the years of the Second World War in Europe in poverty and in authoritarian societies. I was brought up to cherish democracy —

**The Chair:** There's a glass of water there if you'd like. Would you like a one-minute recess, or do you need some help finishing?

**Ms Fainsilber:** I'm almost done. Thank you.

**The Chair:** The good news for you is that you won't have to have any questions, because you've done your 10 minutes. Please go ahead and finish.

**Ms Fainsilber:** I was brought up to believe in a responsible society. I truly fear that our precious democracy, with all of its imperfections, is being eroded. That is why I'm here today. I have never spoken at such a hearing, but I felt I had no choice. I appreciate being given the opportunity to speak, but unfortunately I feel that all of these public hearings will be for nothing, that this committee is only going through the motions. I hope that I am proven wrong.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. The committee stands in recess until 7 pm.

*The committee recessed from 1809 to 1902.*

**The Chair:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Before we hear from our first witness, who will be Rosa Barker, I have the lawyer here from the ministry. If there are any questions on the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, we have a three-page report on that from research staff, whom I'd like to thank for providing that. If there are any questions about that report, we have the lawyer present. I wonder if anyone could ask those questions that they may have now.

**Mr Marchese:** A comment. It says on page 2: "An exemption from SPPA does not free a tribunal of all procedural requirements. It will still be expected to comply with the common-law rules of natural justice,

which in general terms, require the tribunal to follow a fair procedure." I just thought I'd read that out.

**Mr Colle:** My first question is, could you cite some cases where this has been done before in previous legislation? Please list them, the names of the acts and the dates.

**The Chair:** Okay, staff, you'll have to please read your names into the record for Hansard before you respond.

**Ms Susan Swift:** My name is Susan Swift. I'm with the legislative research service.

**Mr Spring:** David Spring, senior counsel with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Go ahead, whoever wants to.

**Ms Swift:** Perhaps I'll leave that to the ministry.

**Mr Spring:** I haven't got the dates available of similar exemptions from the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. I'll undertake to provide the dates to the committee, but I have some provisions of various statutes. For instance, under the Child and Family Services Act, custodial decisions of custody directors are exempted from the provisions of the legislation. Under the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, all proceedings under that act are exempted from the SPPA, other than those proceedings before the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

Under the Family Benefits Act, decisions of the Social Assistance Review Board with respect to interim payments are exempted from the provisions of the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, inquiries reviewing heads of institutions' decisions refusing to disclose information are exempted from the provisions of the Statutory Powers Procedure Act.

Under the Mental Health Act, reviews by review boards with respect to the release of clinical records are exempted from the SPPA. Under the Ministry of Correctional Services Act, matters and proceedings before the board of parole and the Custody Review Board are exempted from those provisions.

Decisions of review officers under the Pay Equity Act are exempted from the SPPA. Under the Pension Benefits Act, certain proceedings before the pension commissioner's office are exempted. That's not a complete list but it's a representative one.

**Mr Colle:** Has there ever been a case when a municipal act to sever included the exemption of an appointee, or in this case a transition team or a trusteeship, from municipal affairs where there's been the exemption from the SPPA?

**Mr Spring:** I can't recall at this moment. I'll undertake to find out, but I don't have that information for you.

**Mr Colle:** My understanding of this act is in essence to ensure that there's a free and open process whereby there's notification of meetings, that the meetings are public, that proper procedures are followed. Why would the ministry want to not abide by basic processes of due process? Why would they need to do that?

**Mr Spring:** Given, as Ms Swift has indicated in her paper, the duty to act fairly on the part of the board in any case, it was thought that it wasn't necessary to impose the more complex, if you will, and formalistic

rules set out in the SPPA, including representation by counsel, leading witnesses and evidence, examination and cross-examination, especially in matters that will in the main be proposed by Metro or its constituent municipalities or its local boards. I guess I'd note also, very much as a secondary matter, that to impose those conditions might — I'm indulging in some speculation here — cause some distance between those who wish to address the board.

The point I was going to make was that the board, under the legislation contemplated, has to exercise its responsibilities in a relatively narrow time frame. My main point though was, as Ms Swift noted in her paper, that the duty to act fairly is already imposed by the common law on the board.

**Mr Colle:** One of the problems is that there's a rush here, there's a time frame restriction, so therefore they can't follow the normal processes of the SPPA.

The other question I have is that this transition team especially, not the trusteeship so much, has enormous powers. They're going to be able to impose restrictions on the amounts of money the new cities may raise and the amounts of money the new cities and local boards may spend in any year. My understanding is that that is public money and the allocation and expenditure of public money should not be done behind closed doors and there should be some kind of public notification of that type of activity. We're not just talking about a very narrow field dealing with a few citizens. The decisions of this transition team are going to affect 2.3 million people.

I just don't see the reason why they are not only not subject to judicial review, but their hearings are not going to be open to the public and there's no notice required. In other words, if they're going to set the new mill rate for the new megacity and restrict spending, they won't even have to let the public know that they're doing this. How is that compatible with common law?

1910

**Mr Spring:** As I understand the bill, the functions of the transition team, as opposed to the board of trustees, with respect to municipal spending are recommendatory only. Currently under the bill the team is to consider what further legislation may be required to implement the act and then to consider whether restrictions should be imposed on the amounts the new city may raise, the amounts the new city and its local boards may spend in any year and make detailed recommendations to the minister. I think it is not, with deference, within the purview of the transition team to establish the budgetary limits for the new city.

**Mr Colle:** You're saying that it isn't or it is?

**Mr Spring:** It isn't.

**Mr Colle:** Why would the act read, "The transition team shall consider whether restrictions should be imposed on the amounts the new city may raise and the amounts the new city and its local boards may spend in any year, and make detailed recommendations to the minister"? They're also going to be hiring. There's going to be hiring of department heads and other employees for this new city. On top of that, my understanding is that they're going to run the election. How can you have

someone running the election who isn't subject to public meetings, public notification and essential due process?

These are enormous powers these people have, and to not subject them to open hearings, to public notification — if you're running an election, it's a public process. This transition team will run the election for 2.3 million people, overriding the existing clerks, overriding the existing processes. They can do this without public notification, behind closed doors. Why is this necessary?

**Mr Spring:** Once again, with deference, I believe that it may be a member of the transition team appointed to conduct the election or it may be another person. In any case, I believe the scheme of the legislation is that the conducting of that election will be done in concert with the assistance of municipal clerks and other functions.

In response to the member's question, I can only say also that like the board of trustees, the transition team is under a legal duty to act fairly at all times. If it should be found that it was acting manifestly unfairly, presumably a court might interfere.

**Mr Colle:** But Mr Spring, there's a problem, though. They are not subject to court review, so therefore where are the checks and balances? As it states very specifically, "The decisions of the transition team are final" — final means final — "and shall not be reviewed or" even "questioned by a court." It's not even a matter of review. Our Ontario courts will not even be able to question these decisions. How is this compatible? You've removed the public process in terms of notification of hearings. On top of that you've compounded it by — not you. Sorry, sir, it's not you. Then there is no recourse to the courts. How is the public supposed to have input in what this transition team decides in terms of running the election, for instance?

**The Chair:** Mr Colle, I'm going to have Mr Spring answer this one as best he can and then we're going to move on and start hearing witnesses.

**Mr Spring:** I think as a principle of law, and I would defer to other counsel who may be around this table, if a tribunal is found to act unfairly, it can be said in law to have exceeded its jurisdiction, and accordingly the section of the act that says that the decisions are not reviewable by a court would not apply. As I understand that section, it applies only where the tribunal is found to be acting within the ambit of its jurisdiction. Once the tribunal is found to have acted unfairly, a court would say that it has acted without its jurisdiction and accordingly its decisions are reviewable. I think that's the answer I would provide in that particular instance.

**Mr Colle:** One last question: I cannot see how — in the act it's so specific. It says that there's no judicial review, that decisions are final. The word "final" is in there twice. It says "no judicial review" and "not be reviewed or questioned by a court." You're telling me, therefore, that this clause isn't necessary. Why is it there in the act, then?

**Mr Spring:** It's there to import some degree of finality to the board's decisions. It assumes that in coming to those decisions, whether they favour one side or another, so long as they are decisions the board is empowered to make by the statute — the idea is then that a court would not review those decisions.

**The Chair:** I understand this may have raised other questions, and if it has done that, then the subcommittee can chat again and we can decide another opportunity to have counsel in to continue this, but for now I want to continue, if I can, with witnesses.

**Mr Marchese:** Just a quick statement: I'm not sure the questions the member for Oakwood is asking could probably be explained and/or answered by the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. I think what he's raising, and I agree with him, is offensive to some of us because of the nature of what it does, so it becomes in my view a political matter.

If people find it as offensive as we do, we hope they will articulate it as they come forward and be able to persuade the government that what it is doing is as offensive to them as it is to us. I just think it becomes a political matter. I'm not sure the Statutory Powers Procedure Act answers those questions, but ultimately what's clear for me is that in a number of places in this event the common-law duty of fairness would nevertheless apply. The nature of those common-law procedural rules would depend on the nature and circumstance of the decision, but in a number of different places it simply reminds us that common law still exists and that people are bound by a sense of fairness and natural justice and so on. That, to me, is sufficient enough that it allows people to be able to make arguments around that.

#### ROSA BARKER

**The Chair:** Would Rosa Barker please come forward. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Rosa Barker:** My name is Rosa Barker. I'm 23 years old and this is the very first time I have ever appeared before a legislative committee to voice my concerns. The reason I am here today is because I strongly believe that democracy within this city is under attack.

I have lived in Toronto since I was two years old. My 18-year-old brother was born just down this street. Toronto is my home. I am here to defend my city and my very basic right to democratic representation. I am also here because I strongly believe in the democratic process. I believe I will be heard. I believe you will listen to me.

I would like to share with you my own experience of the effectiveness of local democracy and the reasons I feel the removal of these local municipal levels of government would be devastating.

Since grade school I have understood that ward meetings and my local councillors' offices were accessible to me. This has only been the case as a result of these people's personal and direct involvement in my community. It has been through this locally accessible tier of government that I and my friends learned about the politics of our city and the democratic process. We could visit their offices for information for school projects and often they would visit out schools and even our homes. They are present at community picnics, meetings and celebrations.

I have had the opportunity meet every one of the elected officials in my ward. I know these councillors and school trustees by name and by face. I know them not

because I have pursued them, but simply because these men and women are active members of my community who live and circulate within it. As a result, they are able to listen and understand and are accountable to me, my family and my neighbours. I am fully aware that there are plenty of imperfections in any system, including this one; however, it is this possibility for direct interaction that creates democratic form.

In this government's campaign to promote megacity legislation, it talks about cutting back on politicians, as if politicians were an unnecessary expenditure. I am led to wonder whether this government believes in the democratic process. What does this government have against politicians? What would government be without politicians? I think it would be a dictatorship. Politicians are the voices of the people, and in order to be the voices of the people they must listen to what the people have to say. So by eliminating the local politicians you are simply eliminating the voices that speak for the citizens of this city and, in doing so, greatly limiting public representation.

As Pete Seeger, a well-loved folk icon, said so bluntly in a recent interview: "Big organizations attract power-hungry people. The world is not going to be changed by big government, but by millions of little people. We will disagree about just about everything. Fine, so long as we don't give up trying to communicate."

Democracy takes time and patience. Democracy is a process and is often imperfect. Democracy is all we've got. It's the key to good and equitable government. I believe that listening to the people should be an immense source of strength, of information, of ideas, and never a burden to those who govern in a democracy.

## 1920

In my experience, my local representatives are accessible to me and my community. When I am concerned about issues which affect my area I have an opportunity to be heard. In great contrast, recently when some concerned citizens met outside the Premier's office to voice their opinions and discuss their concerns, the Premier crept out the back door with his bodyguards. Why has our Premier refused to listen to the people?

When a referendum on amalgamation, Bill 103, was proposed, why did both Premier Harris and Municipal Affairs Minister Al Leach say they will pay no attention to the results? Why is there such contempt shown for democratic process? How is it that our city councils have become accountable to a board of trustees who, without due process, have been appointed "to monitor the actions of the old councils and their boards" as well as "review, amend and approve" their budgets? In other words, our local, elected governments are held in check and the use of our tax dollars forfeit to unrepresentational review. I am reminded of the battle cry of the American Revolution, "Taxation without representation is tyranny."

Is this democracy or dictatorship? I still believe this is a democracy, and I still believe you will listen to me and the other concerned people who have come to speak here today. I still believe that some of you are brave enough and are willing to stand up for democracy. I believe you will listen to us and stop the unseemly haste with which this legislation is being forced upon us. We must stop and

talk. The people of Ontario are a rich source of information and ideas. Whether or not we ultimately decide to change the borders of any particular city, let it only be the very end result of a real democratic process. I don't think that's easy. It isn't streamline and it isn't fast. But it's all we've got and it is priceless.

I must say I find it ironic that I am here to defend politicians to politicians, but politicians are an essential element of the democratic process. I am here because politicians are people, and like all people are capable of change. I am here because I believe we are all capable of understanding one another. I believe in the democratic process, as messy and frustrating and inefficient as it may sometimes seem; it is worth defending at all costs.

To conclude, I am a young woman. I have hopefully a lot of my life ahead of me. This city is my home and the decisions you come to will affect the way I live. Please listen to me and the other people who speak tonight and give democracy the time necessary for due process.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Barker, for your presentation. You have effectively used your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this evening.

## ISABEL BLAIR

**The Chair:** Isabel Blair, please. Welcome, Ms Blair.

**Ms Isabel Blair:** My name is Isabel Blair. I thank the committee for allowing me to speak at this hearing.

I'd briefly like to cover three areas I'm concerned about: (1) Why is the government proposing amalgamation? (2) Is the process democratic? (3) What is involved in being a Conservative?

Why is amalgamation proposed? For efficiency? Financial savings? "Efficiency" is an ambiguous term. Does it mean you want cheaper government? Less government? Is less government more efficient? Harry Truman once said, "Efficient government is dictatorship." Efficiency as the only priority for government is a dangerous thing. The trains ran on time in Mussolini's Italy, but was it worth the tradeoff of democratic rights? Is making sure the population is properly represented of equal or greater importance? What about accessible, rather than distant government? I believe there are several factors that need to be considered to ensure that government is well run.

Is there a financial saving in amalgamation? Professor Andrew Sanction and many others have pointed out that all academic literature on amalgamation indicates that it always raises the cost of government. Professor Sanction's analysis of the KPMG report commissioned by Al Leach calls into question what savings, if any, exist.

He writes: "There are two main problems with the KPMG report. The first is that much of the overall projected potential saving is related to 'efficiency enhancements' rather than to amalgamation. The second is that the analysis of the projected savings directly attributable to amalgamation is sketchy and incomplete. Nowhere does it show that amalgamation necessarily leads to efficiency enhancements or that efficiency enhancements are impossible without amalgamation."

He continues: "There is no reference to the standard works on 'the new public management' or the reinvention of government; or to the extensive academic literature on the relationship between size of municipalities and the cost of municipal services. The absence of such references can no doubt be explained by the fact none of this literature supports the position so cautiously adopted in the KPMG report."

#### Is the government acting in a democratic fashion?

Recently, some Conservative supporters have commented on voter turnout in the municipal elections, which is usually somewhere around 30%. The view is that because there is low voter turnout for municipal elections, then it is not a true democracy.

No one should get carried away with voter turnout percentages. The average turnout in provincial elections, by the way, is 63%, as you're probably aware. In 1995 the Conservatives got 28% of the vote of the eligible electorate. The last time a provincial government got over half the popular vote was in 1929.

#### 1930

In Switzerland the turnout for referendums is usually about 32%. There are a lot of referendums in Switzerland. No one would argue that Switzerland is not a democracy. In the United States, where a substantial amount of the electorate doesn't turn out for elections, the country is still obviously a democracy.

We also have a tradition of liberal democracy. Liberal democracy means that due regard is given not only to the temporary majority but to all concerned. We don't exclude whole blocks of people from the decision-making process. The 72% of the electorate that did not vote Conservative in the last provincial election deserve a voice in the process, as do those who did vote Conservative and have reservations about Bill 103.

Michael Polanyi, in a letter to the Globe and Mail on February 8, included text from the Common Sense Revolution pamphlet: "This is only the beginning. We want this document to stimulate an open, vigorous and honest discussion.... We have released this plan so you can think it through, ask questions, and perhaps help us find other, better ways to reach our goals." Mr Polanyi concludes, "We have thought it through. But is Mr Harris listening?"

I may add, is Mr Leach listening? Or any conservative MPP, for that matter? Following is a paragraph from an article in the Globe and Mail, February 4: "Mr. Leach clearly indicated to reporters that the government is not prepared to consider major changes in the legislation of Bill 103, even before critics and supporters of the amalgamation had had an opportunity to make their cases at the hearings."

And here's more from the Common Sense Revolution pamphlet: "We will sit down with municipalities to discuss ways of reducing government entanglement and bureaucracy with an eye to eliminating waste and duplication as well as unfair downloading by the province.... Resolving the issue of efficient local government will take a great deal of hard work."

Well, that sounds good; however, as Mr Leach clearly indicated to reporters, the provincial government has not lived up to these promises. There has been little dis-

cussion with the municipalities or anyone else about these issues and, oddly enough, the provincial government is doing exactly what its pamphlet stated it would not do: unfair downloading of welfare costs.

What is a true conservative? I am deeply disappointed that the Conservative government is acting in such an unconservative way. To be a conservative is, by definition, to be averse to rapid change, to be moderate and cautious. Toronto has a long tradition of providing an excellent quality of life. It is a lively city full of tradition and character. Positive changes are possible only when its citizens and elected officials, who know it best, can have a say. I would have hoped, and I still hope, that every Conservative MPP would act in a truly conservative way, completely examining what is successful about the municipalities in the greater Toronto area, what needs improvement and, after long consultation and deliberation with citizens and experts, would make a thorough plan based on hard facts and truly common sense.

**Mr Marchese:** Ms Blair, I want to thank you for taking the time to come and make this presentation. The fact that people are here defending something they believe in is, for me, very heartening. I've got one quick point and a question. Just to support what you say, I've got the paper that Professor Sancton wrote. It's called Reducing Costs by Consolidating Municipalities in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario. The essence of this is that he says, "There is no academic evidence to suggest that consolidation produces savings."

Professor Kitchen as well says: "There is no evidence or studies that indicate that there would be cost savings associated with amalgamation within Metro," which is one of the main reasons why this government wants to do this, they claim.

Mr Leach, who was present, says in a Toronto Sun interview that opponents have failed so far to convince him to change his plans. He says, "All I've heard is that it's a bad thing to do," but nobody has given him any evidence it's bad.

Professors here who've done a thorough study in America and Britain and here say there is no evidence to suggest there would be cost savings, but he's forging ahead. I guess he still needs further evidence. I'm not quite sure what he's looking for.

**Ms Blair:** I was hoping he would listen to the evidence.

**Mr Marchese:** We hope so too. A quick question. We know that in the rest of the province, outside of Metro, they're getting a fair shake. People out there are able to decide how to amalgamate and talk about how they might do that. In Metro Mr Leach and the Premier have decided this is not good for us. How do you feel about the fact that we're treated differently here in Metro?

**Ms Blair:** I believe it's undemocratic and I'm hoping we will be given the same fair shake, as Mr Marchese says, that everybody else in the province gets. I think we deserve to be heard and to review all the material.

**Mr Marchese:** Do you have any final words for Mr Leach? Given that he's here and you have an opportunity to send him a message, what kind of message do you want to send him while he's around to listen to you?

**Ms Blair:** Actually pretty much the message I've said. I'm not going to repeat myself and bore you, but thank you for hearing me and I hope you consider it.

**Mr Marchese:** Thank you for coming.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentation. Would Steve Crossman please come forward.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please, ladies and gentlemen.

### STEVE CROSSMAN

**The Chair:** Welcome, Mr Crossman.

**Mr Steve Crossman:** Thanks very much. My name is Steve Crossman. I don't really like giving presentations, but I guess for me a desperate situation calls for desperate measures.

Toronto is supposed to be the world's best city to live and work in, an honour that we have been given in spite of the actions of recent governments that seem to be intent on killing the golden goose. It seems to me like the provincial government has a solution in search of a problem. But hey, if we have the world's best city, it ain't broke and we don't need to fix it.

It depresses me when it appears that our elected politicians have no idea of what makes Toronto the great city that it allegedly is. In the 1950s Toronto built a subway while American cities were building destructive highways. Toronto instituted North America's first, if not the world's first, metropolitan government, which served its original purpose of coordinating growth, including transportation.

Toronto has cultivated neighbourhood development and local democracy and is now renowned for being a city of diverse, livable neighbourhoods. Toronto is a city of people who can stand up against bad ideas, like the Spadina Expressway in the early 1970s, and get them cancelled.

Toronto has encouraged residential development in the downtown core, which has kept downtown Toronto livable and vibrant, unlike the downtown areas of most American cities. Toronto has been described as "Vienna surrounded by Phoenix." The city of Toronto is the second most densely populated city, next to New York City, in Canada and the United States.

Toronto has blended public and private housing, allowing for a mix of different income groups and different types of people. The Toronto city council has been a source of progressive programs and planning policies, both of which can be copied abroad.

The point I'm trying to make of all of this is that Toronto became great by going against the grain of popular, contemporary development ideas. While American cities proceeded to destroy their urban areas, Toronto did things differently than other cities and has been reaping the benefits and rewards ever since. We have been leaders not followers. We have made history by not repeating the bad solutions of other places.

Now the provincial government comes along and, for no valid reason, wants to take Metro Toronto down a dark road that has already been travelled by American cities, cities that have seen increases in their costs and taxes and their outmigration, cities that have decayed. These increases in costs, between 20% and 40%, have

been well documented in the Wendell Cox report, available on the city of Toronto's Web site on the Internet. Tax increases will force businesses to close and force middle-income people out of Toronto.

Analysts have built an overwhelming case against the megacity idea by showing that none of the studies of the future of Toronto and the reorganization of the greater Toronto area have recommended an amalgamated Metro Toronto; all reputable studies have shown increased costs in amalgamated megacities; and, third, the province has been shamelessly flogging the KPMG study it commissioned, despite the fact that this report does not promise even minimal tax savings.

#### 1940

Now analysts have turned their attention to trying to come up with ulterior motives for our discredited government's mindless support of a megacity. Is it blind ideology? Is it the fear and bitter resentment of rural and suburban politicians towards the country's biggest city? Is it stubborn machismo when confronted with the facts? Is the government behaving like a little child when caught telling a lie, sticking lamely to their story and unwilling to fess up? Or has the government known the truth all along and is simply lying about the potential benefits of a megacity? Perhaps the government is fearful of looking lazy if it doesn't come up with mega-changes all the time.

Whatever the explanation, it's clear the government has dug itself into a hole and needs a way out of this mess. Indeed, it has even incurred the wrath of many of its supporters and traditional allies like the board of trade.

If the issue is really about money, the provincial government should accept the proposal of the various local municipalities. In Change for the Better, the municipalities have said that they can cut \$240 million from Metro-wide operations. Give them a chance. The city of Toronto, on their Web site, have shown that they have cut their expenditures from about \$593 million to \$510 million from 1991 to 1997, about a 14% decrease, and their net liabilities from about \$197 million to \$80 million between 1993 and 1997, about a 60% decrease. The plan of the local municipalities means that we don't have to spend the \$200 million to \$400 million that Metro says it will take to create the megacity. And I'm just reminded that these are probably the same people who estimated that the SkyDome would cost \$150 million when it was well over half a billion dollars.

Revisit the Trimmer, Golden and Crombie reports and see where savings can be had while local democracies are retained. Judge their solutions on their own merits. There is still plenty of time to act. Now is the time for gutsy leadership, and I don't care whether this leadership comes from this committee or Conservative backbenchers who know that amalgamations all across the province are a bad idea or Mike Harris himself, who could do worse than to emulate the responsiveness and the foresight of a Bill Davis when he cancelled the Spadina Expressway.

Now just a word about democracy. Is this Toronto? Jeez, I was beginning to think this was Belgrade or China. Is this a totalitarian dictatorship or what? Bill 103 attempts to put the government and its appointed trustees above the law. The arrogance of this government in the

persons of Mike Harris and his Minister of Municipal Affairs, Al Leach, has been incredible. "We won't listen to the will of the people regardless of the outcomes of the various referenda." Kind of makes me wonder if they'll go when they're voted out of office.

I'd like the Premier to show us where in the Common Senseless Revolution an amalgamated Toronto was promised. Does the government believe it is saving us from politicians by reducing accessibility and accountability in our local officials? Personally, I'd rather be saved from the provincial government.

This whole rushed process has been as contemptible as the actions of the Minister of Municipal Affairs in the House. Why the rush? Well, I think it's because the more you know about this ill-conceived, half-baked plan, the more likely it is that you'll hate it and the more likely it is that you'll vote no.

All I'm left with are questions about why this is being done at all, let alone so quickly. The government should come clean and tell us the real reason. I think it is a blatant attempt to kill local democracy and muzzle opposition. What do you think?

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Crossman, let's take a look at one of your facts. You say let's deal with the facts. Would you say that the property assessment system within Metropolitan Toronto as it presently exists is a pretty good system and that there are hardly any inequities or unfairness vis-à-vis the city of Toronto property owners or suburban property owners, that everything, relatively speaking, is great?

**Mr Crossman:** I know there are tax inequities and those can be resolved in forums other than amalgamating cities. Frankly, I know there are a lot of inequities between suburban municipalities within Metro and beyond Metro and amalgamating cities in Toronto is not going to solve that inequity.

I know for a fact that the city of Toronto and residents of Metro are subsidizing the education of students all across this province. Certainly there are financial inequities everywhere, but I don't see that amalgamation has much to do with setting that straight. That can be resolved in another forum.

I think the Conservative government is mixing up issues. They're putting downloading and the trusteeship of the public education system and amalgamation and tax inequities all in the same —

**Mr Hastings:** How then would you deal with the tax inequities that exist, aside from the amalgamation proposal that's on the table? What kind of property assessment system would you propose?

**Mr Crossman:** I'm not going to propose any particular system. Personally, I don't mind paying taxes as long as I can see where they're going and that they're serving purposes I approve of. I don't believe that market value assessment or actual value assessment is going to resolve all the problems this city has. I think they're going to force middle-income people out of the city as well.

**Mr Hastings:** Then is the status quo preferable for you? Although you did mention that the mayors' proposal had some merit, whereby each municipality would be responsible for a prime function, like East York would do licensing, on what basis they arrived at that, I'm not sure.

**Mr Crossman:** Yes, I think the provincial government should hold the local municipalities to their word. They say they can cut a quarter of a billion dollars of their expenditures. There's no overhead cost to that plan. We have the bureaucracies and institutions already set up to handle that. If they can't reach goals, then deal with that when it happens. But if you're going to set up a bureaucracy at the cost of \$200 million to \$400 million to come up with a megacity, which is what's been estimated by Metro, and then not to experience the tax savings that we're not apparently going to experience as a result of these studies that have been done — it doesn't cost the provincial government anything to let them go ahead. It saves \$250 million.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Crossman, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

### STEFAN GUTKOWSKI

**The Chair:** Would Stefan Gutkowski please come forward. Good evening, Mr Gutkowski, welcome to the committee.

**Mr Stefan Gutkowski:** Good evening, Mr Minister, members of the committee, ladies and gentlemen. As Bernard Shaw said, you either have to learn to get what you like or like what you get. Never in my life has this been truer than with regard to the government's plans to forcibly amalgamate Toronto's seven municipalities into one, supposedly in the name of cutting taxes and duplication, yet, if a similar experience in the UK 25 years ago is any guide, achieving the exact opposite.

Torontonians have long been thorns in the side of other Ontarians and Canadians, perhaps because we've been successful in getting what we like. Like other Canadians, we can compromise. If megacity becomes a reality, we'll learn to like what we get and we'll work with everyone and make the best of the megacity. But right now we're still at the getting-what-you-like stage, and the government ignores the voices of concern, including many it thought it had on side, at its own peril, and ours.

Peter Ustinov, the actor, referred to Toronto as New York run by the Swiss, because of our devolved metropolitan style of government and the large-scale citizen involvement, which attracted him — not just him but also the likes of Fortune magazine. Metropolitan government is our local version of federalism. It means the large-scale matters should be at the higher level, while what the Toronto Sun's George Jonas calls the "janitorial" issues should stay at the community level, closest to those they serve, where the people have direct input in what happens to them.

Closeness and connectivity have, contrary to what we're led to believe, kept taxes down, not forced them up. Local councils learned long before the province did that taxes couldn't go on rising and acted accordingly. That's why during the 1990s there's been virtually no rise in local taxes while the CPI has risen an average of 2% a year.

One irresponsible claim about the status quo is the claim of duplication, that taxpayers are paying for seven governments to do what one could. Excuse me, there may be seven municipalities, but taxpayers are only paying for

two of them: Metro and the municipality they live in. Etobicoke doesn't pay for Scarborough's local services or vice versa. Etobicoke's needs aren't the same as Scarborough's needs or vice versa, and neither city's needs is the same as the city of Toronto's, especially on transit and planning. It would be dangerous to juxtapose them under one roof.

Another irresponsible claim is that only incumbent local politicians, fearing their jobs, oppose the megacity. Just look. In a short trip down memory lane you'll find that the 1990s have not been kind to incumbent local politicians: three of the five sitting mayors were defeated in the 1994 election. One of these, Fergy Brown of York did survive the 1991 vote but three quarters of his council didn't. Oh yes, goodness, John Sewell. Can't forget him, can we?

Conversely, if the megacity does become a reality, there's nothing to stop incumbent politicians running for seats on the new council, winning and getting up to their old tricks once again.

#### 1950

We're also told the megacity would keep the NDP in check. Anybody who has fought the NDP knows they identify their vote during elections and get it out on voting day. True, they may never elect a mega-mayor, so they'll concentrate their efforts at the ward level, where they could win enough seats and ally themselves with Liberal moderates to control the new council. Imagine an elected right-wing mayor facing such a council and seeing his elected platform outvoted bit by bit. What a recipe for gridlock.

In addition to left-right polarization, there's also the risk of a downtown-suburban polarization, and also a chasm forming between the megacity Toronto and all the 905 municipalities. Is that what we want?

A more substantial claim against the status quo is that the current power split causes confusion which suppresses voter turnout and the megacity would change that. Voters aren't stupid. They can always go to a library to find out who does what. Low turnout is a major problem, no question about that, but that's the same right across North America. There's an old American phrase, "Bad officials get elected by good citizens who don't vote." Some people just find local politics plain boring and a megacity won't change that. I'm sorry, that's their problem, not ours.

There are three factors that dampen turnout here: We vote in November when it gets dark early, and many people, especially women, don't want to go out. There's no guaranteed time off work to vote, unlike the other types of votes. Also, many voters, especially tenants, are not reminded regularly as to how much city hall costs because its costs are hidden in the rent they pay, with an affect on apathy and so on.

My solutions are: Move the local vote up to October, before the clocks go back; have an advance poll held Thanksgiving weekend when students are home and can vote; guarantee employees time out to vote; and require that all municipalities disclose property tax information for tenants and others.

I share megacity supporters' concern that the number of politicians be reduced. So do the Metro mayors, and I

supported their proposals they released just before Christmas, which would cut the political payroll by a third.

I'm not entirely against any type of amalgamation. Indeed, the city of York, which does have serious financial problems, is courting merger with Toronto. If they want to go ahead, let them do so, and others elsewhere in the province, same thing. Perhaps we should reform municipal financing to induce that.

Instead, the amalgamation which should take place should be at the regional level, by abolishing Metro and the four regions, replacing them with a greater Toronto regional district, on the lines of Vancouver's, not as sophisticated as our current regions, but with more powers than the proposed Greater Toronto Services board, including the right to tax. It should have at most 40 to 45 members. Most of these would be the constituent mayors, ex officio, and then a dozen or so others elected from the largest municipalities to boost representation by population.

I believe that the tax burden, especially as the Premier is talking about having a GTA-wide tax thing for the downloading, could be spread by having local municipalities yield a portion of their tax take to the GTA, which would then redistribute it via a capitation grant to all municipalities.

Politically, I propose that roads and parks, which are currently split between regional and local levels, entirely devolve down to the local level while the remaining regional powers — police, transit, long-term care, housing and welfare — be replaced with the new GTA council. This has several advantages. As the Premier has floated the idea of a GTA-wide tax base for paving for the downloading, and groups like the boards of trade have in the past expressed openness to a GTA regional government, it would avoid the scenario of the 905 municipalities having to contribute to the costs of something without having a say in what happens. With this power split, it could allow the TTC and GO Transit to be merged, as well as the 15 or so municipal transit systems. Now there are some real savings right there, not to mention the savings from fewer civic workers at the regional level.

This will all be so much easier than converting into a megacity, which will be a logistical nightmare. Everybody agrees that it will cost approximately \$200 million in the first year for the severance bill, but with added responsibilities, the civic workers in the megacity will want the highest pay rates going. Salaries across Metro currently vary by up to \$2 per person-hour. If 25,000 workers must be each paid an extra \$2 per hour under amalgamation, that's \$50,000 per hour, \$400,000 per day, \$2 million per week, and \$100 million per year, year after year after year, and that's not even counting overtime. A megacity is going to mean a mega-strike. Do you remember the civil service strike?

Was it Bob Dylan who sang, "The times, they are changing"? I agree, the status quo can't go on. That was agreed by the various task forces on Toronto's future and the general consensus was that Metro and the regions should be abolished and the genuinely regional powers go to a GTA-wide body.

Similarly, we can't afford the existing number of school boards, despite my concerns as the son of teachers as to what happens with school quality if a reputable board gets abolished. However, if Roman Catholics can get by with one board, there's no reason why the rest of us need eight, but the proposals regarding trustees and councillors create more problems than they solve.

True, salaries must be capped. My preference is a maximum of X dollars per pupil in the board in question. It's a much better way to go there. I notice there are no proposals for salary caps in the megacity, but with the mega-council it will be many times harder for ordinary folks to get a councillor's ear, as they'll have to jockey with groups like the board of trade, CORA and the labour council, which are at least well-connected.

Another matter untouched is that of election spending and financing. What limits will there be? Will there even be any? We're not told. Campaign financing is covered in this week's Economist magazine — that is, the London Economist — which two weeks ago covered the megacity issue with a photo of the Premier above the caption "Bomber Harris," referring to the Second World War RAF pilot whose mission was to destroy enemy cities. The article ends with: "The changes on the way are less of a revolution than a whirligig. Whirligigs have a habit of spinning out of control and even savaging the man in charge."

Alarmed as I am at the high-handed way the government has proceeded with this, I am reminded of an interview in the Toronto Star a few weeks ago when Tony Clement, MPP, was discussing a bill the government has regarding referenda in which, if a petition is circulated on an issue and it garners the signatures of 10% or more of the electorate, the government would be required to introduce the measure in question in the House. That being so, I'm surprised the government is planning to ignore the results of the referenda.

I have the 1995 provincial elections manual and it tells me that 650,000 people constitute just over half the entire electorate in the 30 Metro ridings in the 1995 election, 415,000 is more than half of the number in Metro who actually voted in those ridings and, most importantly, 667,000 is over 10% of the entire electorate of the province. Don't rule out the possibility of that many voting no in the forthcoming referenda.

A prominent Tory told me three weeks ago, "We're two-thirds of the way there"; in other words, past that 415,000 mark I just mentioned. If that many vote no, given what the Premier said regarding the tax base being spread GTA-wide and the fact that the board of trade has shown past openness regarding the GTA government, is the government prepared to deal? As ex-British Prime Minister Harold Wilson said, "A week is a long time in politics." There are three weeks to go. May the universe unfold as it should. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Gutkowski. You've exhausted your allotted time. Thank you for coming forward to make your presentation this evening.

MARK IRISH

**The Chair:** Mark Irish, please. Good evening, Mr Irish.

**Mr Mark Irish:** I would like to thank the committee for having me here tonight to make a presentation. I will begin my presentation by quoting from John Ralston Saul's letter to the Globe and Mail of January 30, 1997. It reads as follows:

"One of our greatest needs today is to find ways, even simple mechanisms, that will help us, the citizenry, to get into the public debate.... It is therefore a matter of inserting the citizen as citizen into the system in whatever way we can. And then letting the mechanisms of criticism combined with high levels of involvement take place."

The citizens have inserted themselves into the system in astounding numbers and in a variety of ways. With the concerns about Bill 103, the megacity bill, you can find them everywhere. They are attending Citizens for Local Democracy meetings, 1,000 or more at a time on Monday nights. They are writing countless letters to the newspapers. They are phoning their MPPs' offices in overwhelming numbers. They are holding numerous ratepayer and community meetings, day after day after day. They are connecting with each other by e-mail. They are making presentations at the committee hearings on Bill 103 at Queen's Park. They are talking to their families, friends and neighbours.

They will also have their fundamental, democratic rights honoured when they vote on this major issue, which profoundly and directly affects their lives, in the upcoming referendum. The citizens are involved. They are totally and deeply involved. It appears the only group who wants to stay out of this discussion as much as possible is the Progressive Conservative government.

From here, I could go on to detail my concerns about the fact that the megacity proposal was not a part of the Conservative election platform. I could talk about the strong feeling I have about the intrusion of a board of trustees and a transition team into the affairs of my democratically elected officials. I could relate to you my disbelief when you said you would not pay attention to the results of a referendum. Such contempt for the people is, to me, utterly astounding.

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I could also talk about my thoughts on the hasty KPMG report, but studies by Andrew Sancton and Wendell Cox have examined that report extremely well. I could also mention the sickening feeling I have when I contemplate the tragic consequences that the downloading of welfare and other social services, as well as social housing, will have on the city, but the board of trade and David Crombie, who calls it "wrong in principle and devastating in practice and absolutely the wrong thing to do," have already spoken up about this.

What I would like to do, though, is return to the idea of the citizens, the people, the public, and to speak about how the government must consider all of them when making any decisions. It is the people who are justifiably concerned about a government that is trying to use a series of changes at an accelerated pace to cause confusion and turmoil in the electorate. The people have the feeling too much is happening too fast, with little or no public consultation. They see this as a government that is not working with them but against them. They have deep, deep concerns that must be addressed.

The government should know that changes that are done so quickly, without public input, make for bad decisions. They will create problems that will only have to be corrected later. What the government must absolutely do is stop the megacity bill and all the other bills that were introduced during mega-week, which the citizens rightly see as a package. They must provide the citizens of Metropolitan Toronto and the rest of Ontario with detailed and accurate information of the plans and analyses behind all these bills. They must also give them the time to digest and understand this information so that the citizens can have open and public discussions on these proposals.

At present, the speed with which the government is trying to pass its legislation gives the people no time to really look at the information, and in turn they find it extremely difficult to speak with knowledge on the issues. It is the public who can offer solutions and ideas that can help in the changes that are going on, but at the present time it is the very capable public who are being shut out of the decision-making process.

The government must, with these hearings and with all the other means by which the public is voicing its concerns, truly listen to what it is being told. They must take the time themselves to review and understand what the citizens are saying to them. They are not to treat these hearings as a formality. They cannot merely return to vote on the passage of the megacity bill as if the public meetings, public rallies, committee hearings and referenda never existed.

The citizens are deeply concerned and have countless questions that have gone unanswered by the government. The government must hear what the citizens are saying and must provide any and all answers to their questions. It is up to the government to prove that its proposed changes, the megacity bill being one of them, will do what it says. They cannot merely make broad and grand statements without the necessary facts to back them up.

I myself live in Seaton Village in the Bathurst and Bloor area. From this point, I can walk in any direction — north, south, east, west — for city block after city block of thriving and living neighbourhoods. They are filled with families and businesses, places of worship, parks, community centres, restaurants, stores, theatres etc. They are all so alive. My fear is that with the introduction of a megacity, as well as the changes in education and the downloading of welfare and social housing, these neighbourhoods will start to crumble and this livable city will become just the opposite.

I am truly afraid that what Fortune magazine and I myself consider the best city in the world to live in will come crashing down around us. I do not want to look back a few years from now with a deep sadness of knowing this is where it started but this is where it could have been stopped.

I have to say that I am strongly against the plan to amalgamate Metro's municipalities. I hope the government demonstrates the ability and above all the wisdom to consider all the drastic consequences of the megacity bill and all the other bills introduced during mega-week, which myself and others see as a package of linked bills.

I hope this government will listen to the concerns of all the citizens. Thank you.

**Mr Colle:** Your emphasis is on the linkage and the packaging of all these bills together. The question Mr Hastings asked was: "Prove the linkage. How else would you undertake the market value reassessment unless you did the megacity?"

**Mr Irish:** There were other things too. How else would you create one school board without undertaking the megacity idea as well? What you do is get rid of your competition, get rid of the people who are going to question you. Then what you do, with your transition team, is put the people in place who won't question you. Therefore, in education the one public board could be put in place a lot easier without six mayors opposing it, as opposed to one mayor who will be too busy with too many other things and just completely rushed off their feet with everything that is happening.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here this evening.

#### ANNE DOTHER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Anne Dother. Good evening, Ms Dother, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Anne Dother:** I don't have a prepared statement. I just wanted to come in and talk about how I cannot believe that there could be an arrogance or a kind of government that could say: "We have this plan and we don't care what the people think. You guys can have a referendum and we don't care." Basically, that's my only point: I just cannot believe that this can happen in a place that considers itself a democracy.

Every study I've read, everything I've read, has said that the megacity plan is going ahead too quickly, and even if it does go through it doesn't make any sense. I just wanted to come in and say I really don't want it to happen without a certain amount of studies that prove to the contrary. Right now, all the studies have proven that the megacity thing will be a disaster.

I look at American cities that have tried the amalgamation thing, and Halifax. So far, what I've begun to understand is that it costs a lot. It'll be more difficult to get yourself heard. Look at it now. Nobody wants to hear what the people think now. I'm just scared of the megacity plan and I really wish that someone would (a) listen to the people and (b) give it more consideration. That's all.

**Mr Marchese:** Thank you, Ms Dother, for coming and taking the time. I haven't, in my time, seen so many people who feel passionately about a particular issue. We've had hearings on many, many issues, but I have never seen such a wide range of people with such strong passion defending a particular idea, in this case, saving municipalities, local government.

A few questions; I've asked a few other people some of these questions and I want your feelings as well. Outside of Metropolitan Toronto, Mr Leach and the government have decided that it's all right for them to democratically decide how they might want to amalgamate. But in Metro Toronto, Mr Leach and the govern-

ment have decided that that wasn't wise, that he was going to practise his omnipotence and decide what was good for us. How do you feel about being treated differently here in Metro?

**Ms Dother:** I feel that the city of Toronto is a really unique city. I think the arts and the culture and all of the communities that make up downtown Toronto are quite unique. I feel that a lot of the people who are right now pro-amalgamation are not the people who live in downtown Toronto. I don't believe that they are qualified to make decisions on my neighbourhoods and my culture and my community centres. The majority of them feel, "If you don't like the crime in downtown Toronto, move to Woodbridge, move to Markham, move to Scarborough, where welfare or whatever is lower, where the community centres are better." I don't trust any government that says it doesn't want to listen to the people, which is basically what it comes down to.

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**Mr Marchese:** A few other things: I was reading what Mr Leach said in his speech. He said: "Recently, Fortune magazine called Toronto the best city in the world to live and work in."

**Ms Dother:** That's before amalgamation; I'm sorry.

**Mr Marchese:** He's going to make it better, you see. "But today, a city can't just rest on its laurels, no matter how high the praise. Given the relentless competition from the global marketplace, Toronto has to move forward just to maintain its current position...." He argues that this is an "opportunity to create a governance structure that will save money" — there's no evidence for that —

**Ms Dother:** There is no evidence.

**Mr Marchese:** — "remove barriers to growth and investment" — I'm not sure what he means — "and help create jobs."

We've had a lot of different people in front of this committee. We've had lawyers, we've had engineers, we've had consultants and we've had artists — with good poetry, I must admit; each time they come I think it's a poem. We have a lot of people with a great deal of knowledge coming to tell us and Mr Leach they're on the wrong track. Do you think all these people are simply intellectually bankrupt? Is that our problem down here, or is it the reverse?

**Ms Dother:** What I don't understand is why there is a government that doesn't want to listen to the people. Why does this happen? How can it possibly exist that someone can say, "You guys can have a referendum and we're not paying attention"? Here are all these experts — Golden, Crombie and all sorts of people — coming in and saying: "This is going to be a problem. Don't go ahead with it." So far I haven't seen any noted mind, any expert come out and say, "Yo, amalgamation, that's a great idea." I don't see anyone who has nothing to gain. All I see is the minister saying, "Yes, go for this," and the people saying, "No, we don't want to go for this." It doesn't take a lot to understand that more time should be taken to consider what we're talking about and go slowly.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing this evening.

## JOHN HUOT

**The Vice-Chair:** John Huot? Good evening, Mr Huot, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr John Huot:** Thank you. I want to thank the members of the committee for this opportunity to tell you something about the community that I live in and why I believe the proposed removal of local government could put at risk the ties that bind it together.

My name is John Huot. I live with my wife and two daughters, ages 10 and 12, in the west-central ward 12 of the city of Toronto. I have been an area resident for 25 years. What I value most about where I live is that people of very diverse backgrounds have woven together a community of neighbours who respect and care for each other. We are a community which has learned to resolve difficult problems and live together in harmony.

Ward 12's communities originally developed about 80 to 90 years ago near manufacturing and food processing industries which had located along the CPR and CNR lines which crisscross the ward. The modest semi-detached and detached houses we live in were first occupied by people who moved from rural Ontario, Britain and Europe to make a better life for their families. Today more than half the residents have come to our community from other lands, including Portugal, Italy, the Caribbean, Latin America, Greece, Hong Kong, China and Viet Nam.

We live side by side, in both the older housing and new, mostly social housing built on recently vacated industrial land. Our community has more than its share of poverty and not nearly our share of wealth compared to the rest of the city. The average family income is \$43,230 a year, 20% less than the average family income in the rest of the city.

Our community doesn't have a lot of personal wealth, but it is rich in community life. We were proud to have the late Marian Engel, the award-winning Canadian novelist, as a neighbour, even when she published a novel about neighbourhood life titled Lunatic Villas. I believe the existence of local government, whose elected councillors and school trustees must stay close and accountable to the citizens if they hope to get our support on election day, has everything to do with the vitality of our community life. Let me give you a few examples from my own neighbourhood.

In my neighbourhood, children and youth are able to go to good local schools, drop in at a library, play in well-equipped playgrounds and parks, and learn to swim and be good sports in programs run by staff and hundreds of community volunteers at two nearby city recreation centres. The availability and high quality of these community institutions owe much to strong community involvement over the years.

Residents have stories of how the community pressured city government to get safer playground equipment, to get that library on the corner instead of a 7 Eleven convenience store, or to get more playing space for the Lizzies baseball program, organized through the local city recreation centre for some 800 girls and boys from ages 6 to 16. There are no user fees for most of these programs, a policy strongly supported by city of Toronto

citizens and councillors. No other Metro municipality has the same policy commitment to ensure that all community members can access recreation programs regardless of income.

A second example occurred several years ago when a large property beside my neighbourhood was vacated by a structural steel manufacturer. A number of private developers wanted to build private homes only on the site. Thanks to several housing cooperatives and the city of Toronto non-profit housing company, city council was successfully persuaded to purchase the site and develop an innovative mix of social housing and privately owned townhouses. The city of Toronto is the only Metro municipality which has given its housing department a mandate to actively promote social housing.

Many homeowners were anxious about what would happen to neighbourhood life and property values. Today, most would agree that the diverse communities which became our neighbours greatly enriched our community and local schools. It was fitting that the public park in the middle of the new housing development was named in honour of Marian Engel, symbolizing the bond with the older community which surrounds it.

A third example occurred a few years ago when our community had a serious scare regarding a cluster of cancer cases among employees at a school built on the same former industrial lands as the social housing development. There were reasonable fears that soil contaminated by previous industrial uses could seriously put at risk the health of residents and employees alike. Social housing residents, local homeowners and school employees together organized meetings and committees to make sure that city councillors and the city health department conducted a thorough environmental assessment of the entire area and made regular reports to the community.

The assessment's conclusion that there were no hazardous wastes was good news for our physical health. It was also good news for our health as a community because we knew that our involvement at every step of the process ensured that we could believe the report that our health was not at risk, that there was no coverup by authorities worried about the potential costs of cleaning up the site. I believe this positive outcome owed much to having a local city council and health department which can be held accountable to local communities.

## 2020

Our community is far from perfect. We continue to face many challenges to keep it a place where all members can live together in harmony and mutual respect. Our greatest asset as a community is the capacity, developed over many years, to work together, often with our elected representatives, to resolve problems. It is that asset, as well as the many other assets our residents and children enjoy as a part of our community life, which I believe are threatened by the megacity bill and other proposed actions of the current provincial government.

First, the abolition of city council and school board and their replacement by a mega-council and mega-school-board could do irreparable damage to the accountability of municipal government to communities like ours across Metro. Accountability is a two-way street.

Accountability requires that our elected representatives have the ability to effectively represent the concerns of the communities which elect them. Accountability also requires that citizens can hold their elected representatives accountable to the community.

Under the megacity, the average councillor-citizen ratio will increase from 1 to 32,000 to 1 to 52,300. It will be much more difficult for councillors to be aware of the many concerns of local communities in their wards. It will be more difficult for communities to get their councillors involved in the type of local issues which have been so important in my community. Furthermore, the policy-making and administrative apparatus of the megacity and mega-school-board will be much further removed from accountability to local communities.

The new ward boundaries will also seriously undermine the accountability of elected representatives to local communities. For example, ward 12's current boundaries reflect actual historical communities with substantial commonalities of ethnic/racial background and relatively less income disparity. Under the megacity, ward 12 will be redistributed into three different wards. My community will become a tiny add-on to a ward based on the federal St Paul's riding, which has the highest average family incomes of any riding in Metro and much less ethnic and racial diversity. A megacity councillor or trustee will get all the votes they need in the more affluent areas and will have no need to be accountable to citizens in our community.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mr Huot, I must tell you that we're running out of time. Would you wrap up, please?

**Mr Huot:** I'll just finish.

The second important way in which the megacity government proposal is going to have a serious effect on community life is the proposal to download greater financial responsibility for welfare to the property tax. I have serious concerns that that could tear apart the fragile bonds that tie our community together. On the one hand, our ward has many families who need welfare and social services. On the other hand, homeowners in our ward live in about 60% of the housing. Neither group can afford to lose these services, nor pay for them from property taxes.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry; I must interrupt you. You've gone well over the time allotted. Thank you very much for appearing before us tonight.

## CHARLES MIDDLETON

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Charles Middleton, please. Good evening, Mr Middleton.

**Mr Charles Middleton:** My name is Charles Middleton. I am an architect-planner. I live in Toronto and teach at Ryerson Polytechnic University. My background includes practice and education in this country, Europe, Africa and southeast Asia. Experience has shown me that Canada and Ontario have been highly regarded for the quality of their political institutions, their educational systems and the planning of their cities. Respect for Canadian ways certainly contributed to my career. I see no reason for the overwhelming change in Ontario that now threatens these.

Change, well considered and well managed, lies at the core of architecture, planning and education. Senior students in this field are trained, before they start design, to develop a clear and concise problem statement. The statement includes analysis of the context for their work and suggests directions for change and for design. If design does not result in a better world, what is the point of it? Or the purpose for students seeking a career in this field? The same might be said for anyone in municipal affairs. It is essential to analyse the context for change: what is already valuable, what must be retained, what can be enhanced and in which directions might change be desirable.

Change for its own sake results only in unnecessary expense. The greater the change, the greater the cost. This highlights the need for a problem statement of the utmost clarity. My concern over Bill 103 is that there is no problem statement. None was included in the Conservative manifesto at the election; none is available now. No wonder there is apprehension and opposition. No one knows what is intended by the bill. It is a classic case of a prescription in search of a problem. For a student, it would result in a failing grade.

But even without a statement of goals, what advantages and disadvantages might the prescription offer? It cannot be taken out of the context of other legislation being tabled. It comes as part of a wider package. It is not surprising that so far it has achieved turmoil, chaos, division and fear.

What does a quick cost-benefit analysis, typical of any large project, reveal? What sense of purpose can we identify?

First, the benefits. Will there be savings? We don't know. There are two camps. But bigger means bigger, for administration if nothing else, and that costs.

Will city government be more efficient? Again, two camps. But it takes mega-corporations, such as the amalgamated city, to generate armies of expensive middle managers. They simply cannot be supported in smaller organizations.

Will it be responsive to citizen needs? We don't know. But the greatly diminished access resulting from fewer elected representatives suggests that it will not.

Will property taxes drop? Again, there is only speculation. Despite glowing assurances to the contrary, it appears that they can only rise, given the downloading of social costs. As the saying goes, "There is no free lunch." Everything in the end must be paid for. Since the bill will be introduced with overlapping change to property tax assessments, the true costs of Bill 103 to taxpayers will be obscured.

Will services be maintained? Where is the proof that they can be? If benefits turn out to be conjectural, what of the costs? What is certain? There is no doubt on the following: There will be a tax cut. Little matter that it benefits the well-to-do. That must be paid for. We are assured that social costs will be downloaded to municipalities. They must be paid for. Implementing any amalgamation of this scale will incur mega-cost. It must be paid for. Property taxes will continue to be paid.

These are monetary costs. What of costs to the society that we know is the envy of much of the world and is

now put at risk by this bill? Unelected government appointees will take the place of elected municipal representatives, at least in the interim. There will be no recourse to the courts. Unelected government appointees will be given power over neighbourhoods. The changes of Bill 103 will be irreversible. Last but not least, the massive contingency fund will wrest control over urban life from the citizenry, to concentrate it in the hands of the powerful élite holding the purse strings. All this takes place in an atmosphere of wasted energy and creativity lost in confrontation.

## 2030

We tally the score in cost and benefit. Taxpayers are expected to foot the bill for a scheme with these characteristics: (1) Risks are extreme; (2) costs will be in mega-dollars; (3) benefits cannot be identified with any certainty; (4) control over the venture is stripped away; (5) the package generates not stability but wild confrontation. Bankers would turn the proposal down flat. Why should taxpayers be bullied into funding it, particularly when it is they who stand to lose?

But the heat surrounding this ill-conceived bill masks a much more fundamental issue. It is the question of what kind of place we want greater Toronto to be, what sort of city we want to live in, what kind of collective vision we have.

Bill 103 works to centralize and consolidate power, removing it from the electorate. In the absence of a problem statement, is this the best vision we can achieve for an urban centre that the world respects? There are plenty of examples of this approach in less fortunate countries around the globe, and I've seen a number of them. They do not inspire confidence, and certainly not emulation.

Finally, we live in a rapidly urbanizing world with a population approaching six billion. The central issue at the beginning of the next millennium will be the sustainability of cities and their relationship to the environment that supports them. Toronto already offers a workable solution. Why should it be turned into a conventional anonymous sprawl focused on the car, not people? Do we want to enter the information age entrenching irrevocably the worst excesses of the industrial era? The Premier has just been on a tour of southeast Asia, drumming up support for Ontario business, yet he allows one minister to wreck, through this bill, one of Ontario's greatest assets. Is this common sense?

What are the alternatives? The first and most important relates to the work of this committee. What amendments should be made to the bill? In my view, the major one has to do with the dates for implementation of this flawed proposal. It is my contention that this rig and its driver should be pulled off the road with an immediate, mandatory licence suspension for 90 days at the very least. I urge the committee to find an appropriate legislative mechanism to achieve the same for Bill 103. This would allow time for reflection.

Then perhaps the expertise for which Ontario has been known around the world may start working again for a better alternative, with people, not cuts, at its core, and incorporating, not ignoring, the many creative ideas from reports that have already been submitted. There must be

time beyond that to develop the kind of problem statement or vision that is worthy of this city and province for the next millennium.

I would like to thank you all, as a committee, for listening to my views. I hope that they may, in some small way, contribute to your power to make a difference. Thank you very much.

**Mr Parker:** Thank you very much, Mr Middleton. I want to pick up on one point that you made very articulately, and that is the question of, what is the collective vision we're trying to move ahead with? You're quite certain that by amalgamating services we're going to increase costs, that this is not the way to go. Metropolitan government was established in 1953 as an amalgamation of sorts to coordinate certain services across what are still the Metro boundaries. Over the time since then more and more responsibility has been vested at the Metro level. Right now, the Metro level taxes more than the collective local levels and spends considerably more and carries out considerably more municipal services. The ratio is something like 72% of the spending is done at the Metro level and 28% at the local level. Have we been moving in the wrong direction all this time? Have we been going the wrong way?

**Mr Middleton:** I'm not necessarily concerned about avoiding amalgamation. What I'm saying is that there are a lot of alternatives out there and that this one has been put in place with very little thought. It moves to something that is gigantic. It moves to something that becomes almost impossible to change.

I'll just give a very quick example, if I may. I worked in Zambia just after it had become independent and there was concern about which direction the university should move in. Some were going for a mega-structure: "Let's build an empire. Let's build a wonderful thing." Others were saying, "No, let's move in a direction where we can incorporate change as it comes and as we find it." That's what I would like to see.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Middleton.

#### JACQUES KORNBERG

**The Vice-Chair:** I call upon Jacques Kornberg. Good evening, Mr Kornberg, and welcome to the committee.

**Dr Jacques Kornberg:** My name is Jacques Kornberg. I am a professor in the department of history at the University of Toronto. I am a long-time resident of the city of Toronto. If I have to count, I must admit it's been 30 years. I want to thank the members of the committee for giving me this opportunity to express my views on the issue of amalgamation.

I'm going to talk a little about why I went from neutrality to opposition to this bill, because when I first heard the government speak of amalgamating Metro into one city, I had no opinion one way or the other, I must say. I was eager to learn more about the idea, hear its advocates discuss its merits.

Much later, it dawned on me how naïve I had been then. I realized that I had no opinion because the idea had not been part of public discourse. It had not been proposed, so far as I was aware, by any significant

segment of public opinion, by government-appointed commissions, by think tanks etc. Later I realized or I concluded — and this is what I think now — that the idea was never a long-considered one, at least the way it's been proposed, but had emerged as an improvised and ad hoc solution to certain immediate problems facing the government.

I heard the Minister of Municipal Affairs say on TV once that amalgamation would create a more efficient city, provide better access and less waste and duplication. I then looked for his supporting evidence and I just have not seen the evidence. I have not seen summaries of impact studies in the press supporting this assertion.

In announcing major and sweeping change, the government has not released the reports by the experts or the commissions, or the policy papers, justifying this change. This is different from other cases. For example, with the consolidation of school boards or the new actual value assessment, the field has been prepared after a considerable period of debate and a great deal of available information. I'm really talking about process, but I think process is what it's all about, because process is either transparent or can hide its dark secrets.

#### 2040

Almost as an afterthought, it seemed, what the government offered the public was a quickie three-week study, the KPMG study, that was so full of qualifications about its own conclusions that it carried little weight and doesn't seem to be referred to much as supporting evidence any more. Its critics say that the report omitted a whole range of expenses in its estimates: the cost of harmonizing services upward, the cost of harmonizing collective agreements, the cost of harmonizing thousands of bylaws etc. The report has worked against the government by demonstrating how untenable, or unsupported, its claims are. I believe that if the government had had something better than that report, it would have been to its benefit to release it.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs has been quoted as saying, with regard to amalgamation, that there is "a one-time opportunity ahead of us to take advantage of the best ideas in government innovations and planning." Again, where are the experts speaking up for these ideas?

On the other hand, I read Michael Keating, a political science professor from Western, writing in the Globe, "Nobody has seriously argued anywhere that economies of scale continue past the population of about half a million," and of course we're talking about a population way beyond that, of 2.3 million.

In other words, the wisdom seems to be that bigger always means greater costs per capita. Professor Andrew Sanction, director of the local government program at Western, has also written: "The academic literature on amalgamation is unanimous. It always raises the cost of government."

As I understand it, municipal amalgamation has never been presented as a cost-cutting or efficiency-enhancing measure. There may be all sorts of reasons for it, but not those. It has been done to control growth, to redistribute income or for any number of other reasons, but seemingly not for the reasons stated.

What is really the government's agenda? My own conclusion is that the government has moved in this direction in order to manage its provincial budget. This is a surmise on my part, speculation on my part. But the government hasn't shown any other reason it favours amalgamation, certainly not a persuasive reason. Amalgamation makes the downloading of soft services to the municipalities easier. Put it another way: With Toronto standing alone, downloading soft services on to the city would be a catastrophe. But with Toronto amalgamated into Metro, downloading becomes merely a tragedy. It seems that the government seeks to do what governments do, what the federal government has done: reduce its expenses and load costs on to another jurisdiction. The results for citizens will be that what is given with one hand will be taken with another. My provincial income tax will be cut and my property tax will rise.

Here I can raise the same question as I did about amalgamation, that the policy seems ad hoc, seems a hasty improvisation and not thought through. Who has advocated downloading so high a proportion of soft services on to the property tax? What commissions have proposed it? We've seen friends of the government, like the board of trade, back away from it. The government says it wants strong local government. Is downloading social services on to the property tax a receipt for strong local government? Quite the opposite, it seems. Metro will have to shuffle, cap in hand, to Queen's Park for its annual grant of extra funds to stave off bankruptcy.

But I believe there is something even more dangerous here in putting social assistance services under the property tax. The property tax is not geared to a person's ability to pay, whereas social assistance costs can be volatile in bad times. It seems to me you are putting the costs of welfare directly on to the backs of many who will least be able to afford it: those in danger of falling into arrears on their property tax, those in danger of losing their homes, those who will not be able to buy homes because property taxes are so high.

It seems an axiom that income redistribution measures be taxed according to ability to pay so that you do not create a huge antagonism of interests between the almost poor or the almost middle class and the poor and destitute. It seems to me that if I wanted to think of a better formula to pit Ontarian against Ontarian, to tear the delicate social fabric that holds us together — and I think it's always delicate — I could not come up with something better.

**The Chair:** Mr Kornberg, I'm sorry. We're going to have to ask you to wrap up. You're a little bit beyond the 10 minutes.

**Dr Kornberg:** Okay. The concluding point: The government has shown in the past that it can be flexible. The government has sought the public's response on such issues as environmental deregulation and privatizing Hydro. They've listened to the arguments and postponed making decisions until further investigation. There is so much at stake here that the government should take the time so that whatever decision is made is based on more detailed, factual investigation. I believe we, the citizens of Ontario, expect and deserve nothing less.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Kornberg, for coming forward this evening and making your presentation.

### MICHAEL CRAIG

**The Chair:** Would Michael Craig please come forward? Good evening, Mr Craig, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Michael Craig:** Good evening and thank you. Michael Craig is my name. I'm a long-time political activist in Toronto, a one-time school trustee on the Toronto board. My remarks are called A Progressive, Conservative Analysis of Bill 103. I will end them with an appeal to the Conservative members of this committee to rethink and speak out against this bill.

One of the things that strikes me is that if this half-baked concept for an amalgamated Metropolitan Toronto had been brought forward by Mr Marchese and the NDP government which preceded this one, I have not the slightest doubt that the vast majority of the members on this side would be speaking out against it vociferously, effectively with many of the arguments that we have been hearing tonight.

As a long-time observer and occasional participant in local and provincial politics, I thought I was shockproof. But I have to admit that many recent actions of the Ontario government have shocked me deeply. At the top of the list is Bill 103 to amalgamate the six municipalities of Metro into a megacity. In my opinion, this plan is badly conceived and fatally flawed, and should be rejected.

I am shocked because the Ontario Government is led by Progressive Conservatives and it seems obvious to me that the amalgamation plan is neither progressive nor conservative. "Conservative," in the literal and political sense, means prudent and cautious, inclined to preserve the best of the past. One would expect a Conservative government to act only after careful consultation and analysis, after the financial costs and benefits have been convincingly established and only, in the Bill Davis tradition, when the situation and electors scream out for reform.

In the case of Bill 103, consultation has been at best minimal. The government has characterized its municipal political critics as a free-spending, self-interested group of crybabies. It slanders them by suggesting they're only interested in preserving their jobs, ignoring their very real fears for the future of Toronto as the most livable city in North America.

### 2050

The government and the Minister of Municipal Affairs have also made it clear that they are not concerned about public opinion. They say, "Referendums aren't worth the trouble and expense because they won't change our mind." So much for consultation and democracy.

As for conservative fiscal analysis, that seems to be beside the point. The government has asserted that there are numerous examples of taxpayers saving millions through amalgamation, but the examples I've read about have been unconvincing. In fact, there appear to be as many examples of taxes increasing in amalgamated cities as decreasing.

The consultants brought in with a mandate to prove the fiscal wisdom of amalgamation filled their report with "ifs" and "maybes" and concluded that under ideal circumstances a small amount of money might be saved or that, I gather, a small amount relative to Metro's budget might be lost. Given their mandate and government paymaster, the consultants' lukewarm conclusions amount, in my view, to a repudiation of the amalgamation option.

Logically, the consultants' conclusions did not surprise me. If we were examining 13 small jurisdictions, as was the case before 1953, amalgamation probably would save money but today even the smallest of Metro's municipalities, East York, has a population of 100,000. Therefore, I am convinced that money will be saved by local efficiencies, not the creation of a massive bureaucracy.

Of course, all that analysis has been tossed into a cocked hat. The simultaneous, instant policy of uploading education costs, downloading welfare and social services, with a few ifs, ands and buts to totally confuse the fiscal picture, leaves us with a new municipality, new funding and taxing arrangements, and no guarantees.

This would be radical policy and radical change if it had come about after years of consultation and hundreds of reports and academic papers, but given the circumstances of minimal consultation, and not so much independent reports as hasty rationalizations, this set of policies is more than radical — it's foolhardy.

The urge to reform is commendable when something is broken, so we have to ask, is Metropolitan Toronto broken? As someone who was born at the East General over half a century ago when Toronto was Hogtown, I have to say that Toronto is not only not broken, it's working magnificently. The world tells us frequently that Toronto is a great place to live; a city where the core is alive and well; where people live downtown in safe, healthy neighbourhoods; where public transit, though expensive, works; where people from dozens of cultures have found responsive schools and municipal governments which have helped them become proud Canadians.

Let's not forget that it didn't have to be this way. If the city of Toronto hadn't been led in the early 1970s by councillors like David Crombie, John Sewell and Bill Kilbourn, who were allies, we might very easily have killed the downtown with expressways, housing for the rich only and policies which ignored the integrity of neighbourhoods. In other words, Toronto could have followed in the footsteps of Detroit and Washington, with death at its core. If you proceed with your Bill 103, it may still achieve that distinction.

If the city had been dominated by the priorities of suburban areas, with their car-oriented, shopping mall culture, I believe we would not have been as responsive to the needs of immigrants and the poor. City councillors and school board trustees — and not just the lefties, either — fought long and hard to get Metro and the province to fund programs to address the needs of people who don't speak English, who are disabled, retired or poor who are found in disproportionate numbers in the city.

What will become of the city if it is submerged in a megalopolis of 2.3 million? I think that inevitably, and especially if the province holds the purse strings, the city and its most vulnerable residents will lose big time.

The Metro system, as devised in 1953, has worked well. We have achieved a metropolitan perspective and created metropolitan services as required. If structural changes are necessary, they should involve Metro's relationship with the GTA, not the cities inside its borders.

In conclusion, let me address the Progressive Conservatives on this committee and the minister in particular. If "conservative" means that you preserve the best from the past, initiate change cautiously after the need is carefully established, act primarily to reduce taxes and make services more cost-effective, then you will vote against Bill 103 because it offends your conservative principles. If you're concerned about protecting the tens of thousands of vulnerable people who call the city of Toronto their home, then you will vote against Bill 103 because it offends your progressive roots and values. Please be true to your progressive, conservative traditions. Speak out against Bill 103.

**Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights):** Thank you, Mr Craig, for your presentation. I was interested in your comments about the KPMG report and the disclaimers that are in it. A very close associate of mine has a favourite saying about consultants: They borrow your watch to tell you what time it is. It seems to me that is exactly what has happened with this report. You see the disclaimer. It says: "We've done no original research. All the material was provided to us by the ministry." As you have said, there is no real credibility to it. Do you really feel that a decision of this magnitude should have been made on the basis of that kind of study?

**Mr Craig:** I am truly shocked, as I said in the beginning of my remarks, that this has come about on the basis of such flimsy evidence and flimsy policy. The whole thing has struck me as sounding like it came about when Mr Leach and the Premier had a couple of brandies after a dinner and worked it out on the back of an envelope. It really, sir, strikes me as the most mindless policy based on the most flimsy rationalizations. I am shocked, quite honestly, that a Progressive Conservative government has brought this forward.

**The Chair:** On that note, Mr Craig, I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this evening.

#### DAVID HANNA

**The Chair:** David Hanna, please come forward. Good evening, Mr Hanna, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Hanna:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I understand, Mr Leach, that you said that you're not really listening anyway, but given that you're here — I mean, at least to the referendum. But that does speak of democracy, and it is seriously lacking if the government that is elected by the people refuses to listen to a referendum, especially considering that referendum regulations were changed in the fall of 1996 by your own government and now it turns out that you're not even going to be following them. I find that rather obscene.

There are many things I could talk of. I will just try to limit it to a few on a list here. I think what we should be concentrating on is what the Golden report said, having local cities remain and strengthening them and having a

GTA organization that handles the region, but not a megacity. Metro in a megacity will have half the population of the GTA, but eventually, when that association is made in whatever form you're talking about now, which doesn't sound very serious, we'd only get one out of five votes. So that certainly isn't fair.

I question why you're allowing Sudbury a choice. You said that you'd do whatever their council said and that you're not listening to the cities in Toronto or to Metro and even — although Mr Tonks forgot it when he spoke here; I wasn't present — but Metro voted against it as well. I am wondering why you're allowing Sudbury to do it and yet Metro you're not. Is it for some partisan reason? I understand Hamilton doesn't want it either.

What is going to happen is that you're going to make a class system. Let's be honest: We already have a class system, but you're going to bring disparities that are going to make things worse. You are following an American example. We have heard a professor from Ryerson speak about the example of Chicago. Is that a good example? It's got a history of corruption and Mayor Daley was famous for his "strong mayor" tactics.

**2100**

I could tell you personally about Dearborn, Michigan. I think they have the world's record for the longest-serving mayor, 35 years. So much for your strong mayor concept. He stayed in because he was a racist. He was ousted about 12 years ago, but I think he actually died, because the last five years he was handicapped and in a wheelchair and people voted for him on a 1940s billboard that he kept replaying each election. But they were happy with their racist mayor, keeping the type of community they wanted.

I did bring a calendar for you all tonight. I didn't get time to get it Xeroxed, but I'll drop it off another night. It's called Megacity, Greetings from Detroit, the City of Urban Angst. You might think that it's farfetched, but it's not. I'm from Windsor originally. I'm 42 and I watched Detroit go down the tubes, although historically things started even before I was born, to a small extent, but I watched the greatest part of it. That's how some people are getting fooled today. They think that it will be little steps and all the things that are happening: "We'll catch it in time. We'd never allow that to happen." It's perhaps not as severe as that, but what you have planned certainly won't make things better.

I disagree with this aspect of your wanting to change something that works right now and is renowned around the world just for the sake of cutting costs and dumping things on the city so that you can pay for your tax breaks, so you can try to get elected next time. I think that may be reaching into some difficulties, no matter what some pseudo-polls are saying now.

We've had people from London, England, tell the mayor of the city of Toronto about what happened when they got rid of their metro. We've seen what happened with privatization there. All you have to do is watch the CBC to see some of the specials they had on that. We've seen the former mayor of Halifax come and talk to people here and tell you that amalgamation didn't work there. We've seen two renowned examples, both a huge city, London, England, an international city, and one in

our own country, Halifax. It didn't work and isn't working.

You're not listening to your own Who Does What panel that you appointed. Mr Crombie was against downloading and yet this is happening. Why? You call it a fair exchange but it's already been proven that it won't be. I've read your report here too. I've got all kinds of them. Even the Fraser Forum — I mean, Ernie's talking about the cuts in there, but who's backing that? The Fraser Forum, that's a real good journal isn't it? Is the Donner foundation in there too, the C.D. Howe, the Mackenzie Institute?

Provincial policy statements: Your Ontario, Your Choice: A Preliminary Look at Referendum Alternatives. Are we serious? Is Metro being allowed a referendum that you're going to listen to? You published this; are we being allowed to do anything with it? A Guide to Municipal Restructuring. These are all late ones, since you've been in power.

Let's be serious. What's really happening with education is that you want to have charter schools like they're doing in the States. With the province taking over education, that's what's going to happen eventually, at least on a certain scale. It's not going to be any good for anybody except the rich.

As I was saying, when I was a younger person in Windsor, I went to Detroit with my parents. I went with friends when I was a teenager and I went to school there, which was a big mistake. But I saw a lot of things happen and I know a little bit about its history, both in a historical sense and in a full-fledged experience. Although even perhaps Professor Lemon at U of T would disagree, saying that we would go more like New York, meaning just disparities, super-rich and very poor, because we don't have the racial problem that Detroit does, we'll still end up with American-type problems with the proposals that you're putting forth so far.

This talk about a \$1-billion fund to offset the welfare things, when in fact it's not even new money; it's money that was already there for other things anyway. You're giving this image of its being new money when it's not. That's just as bad as your saying that this is happening and putting out brochures that the Speaker of the House admonished you for. Where is democracy?

You're talking about re-engineering education, but look who we have doing it: a dropout owner of a garbage-hauling firm. We have a Minister of Transportation who at one point was actually trying to sell cars to his own government before he found out it would be a conflict of interest. That's interesting.

Disentanglement and privatization: To me they seem like words. There'll never be disentanglement. There'll always be some. You look at everything as black and white, and you might as well look at this poster because it's black and white too. You'll never get rid of total disentanglement.

There's a certain amount of diversity that makes a city interesting. You listened to Jane Jacobs speak here. She's an expert on it. She's had architects follow her all over the world and she says herself that you need this diversity and you need this local aspect of a person being able to go up to their own city hall, not a megacity mayor whom it'll take \$1.5 million to even run for the office. We all

know who's going to run if this happens; you don't even have to read the paper for that. An expert like Jane Jacobs who moved from New York and came here and has lived here and raised her family here; you're not even listening to somebody like that who is world-renowned. She used to live up the street from me when I lived on Albany. It is important to listen to people and not shuffle through on these hearings, and to listen to the referendum.

I attended a meeting by a Professor Bourne and Professor Lemon just the other day at U of T. They had some interesting things to say, although they're more against the downloading, if anything, because they see that as the worst aspect, which I do too. But the mayors have put forth a proposal and there are comparisons, actually in your own KPMG guide and —

**The Chair:** Mr Hanna, we're actually coming to the end of your allotted time. I wonder if you could try to finish up.

**Mr Hanna:** I'll allow some more questions, but things like welfare and senior costs, which are going to be going

up, are going to be the killers of the cities when they're dumped on Metro and on the municipalities. We can see right now that welfare is starting to rise again. There's this aspect of these changes and what you think you're going to force people into, workfare programs and stuff, and that's been proved not to work around the world either.

I've read Bills 103 and 104; I haven't got 106 yet. I don't claim to be any expert, but I have an architectural background and an historical urban planning background and I don't think that what you're putting forth is very good for the city at all. I think that some day it will come back and haunt you in your paid-for retirements in Boca Raton, whoever is paying you from the south, or big business is going to make you retire.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Hanna, for coming forward this evening and making your presentation.

This committee is in recess until Wednesday morning at 9 am.

*The committee adjourned at 2108.*

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Chair / Président:** Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls PC)

**Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York PC)

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Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Simcoe Centre / -Centre PC)  
Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North / -Nord ND)  
Mr Terence H. Young (Halton Centre / -Centre PC)

*\*In attendance / présents*

### **Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:**

Mr Jim Brown (Scarborough West / -Ouest PC) for Mr Stewart  
Mr Douglas B. Ford (Etobicoke-Humber PC) for Mrs Ross  
Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East / -Est PC) for Mr Hardeman  
Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East / -Est L) for Mr Gravelle  
Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale PC) for Mr Young  
Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights L) for Mr Gravelle  
Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre / -Centre PC) for Mr Flaherty  
Mr John L. Parker (York East / -Est PC) for Mr Tascona  
Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt ND) for Mr Len Wood

### **Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole L)  
Ms Annamarie Castrilli (Downsview L)  
Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North / -Nord L)  
Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles L)  
Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold ND)  
Hon Al Leach, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Mr David Spring, senior counsel, municipal and planning law,  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

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**Greffière par intérim:** Ms Lisa Freedman

**Staff / Personnel:** Ms Susan Swift, Mr Jerry Richmond, research officers,  
Legislative Research Service

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ISSN 1180-5218

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 36th Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 12 February 1997

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 12 février 1997

Standing committee on  
general government

City of Toronto Act, 1996

Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto



Chair: Bart Maves  
Clerk: Lynn Mellor

Président : Bart Maves  
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Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Wednesday 12 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Mercredi 12 février 1997

*The committee met at 0905 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

MEG DRONEY

**The Chair (Mr Bart Maves):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the standing committee on general government. The first person to appear before us today is Meg Droney. I hope I'm pronouncing that right. Meg, come on forward. You have 10 minutes this morning to make your presentation. If there's any time left at the end of your presentation, I'll ask Mr Silipo from the NDP caucus to ask some questions.

**Ms Meg Droney:** Mr Chairman and committee members, I'm here today to join my voice to the chorus of voices objecting to Bill 103. Like so many of this city's inhabitants, I am an immigrant. I came to Toronto from the US in 1971 to study at the university, and never left. During those 25 years, I've worn three different hats: impoverished student, struggling and eventually successful restaurateur and, my current role, homemaker and mother of three. I, like all who appear before your committee, love where I live.

I thank you for giving me the time to speak here about Bill 103. I must confess to being somewhat nervous about making this presentation. I've never before appeared before a parliamentary committee, and it is a measure of my alarm and great concern that I am willing to do so. Interestingly enough, the only other time I felt compelled to speak publicly about a political issue was in September 1995, when Toronto city council, in preparing to present to the Golden task force, asked for citizen input about the issues being considered by Anne Golden. What I said there I will say here: I do not want my city swallowed whole by a megacity. I want the distinctly urban character of my life and my children's lives to be preserved, even nurtured. I speak to you as a resident and as a parent. This is my Toronto, my chosen home.

It is a place where my children can know their neighbours and roam freely from one house to the next. It's a place where they learn that neighbours look out for each other, take care of one another in a way that somehow

seems old-fashioned. It's a place where they learn that people come in a wide range of colours and speak many different languages. It's a place where they learn that families have a wide range of incomes and, more important, that net worth is not a measure of human worth.

It is a place where anyone who wishes can play in the T-ball, baseball, soccer and hockey leagues, not just the well-off and athletically talented. It's a place where children can walk to the library together or hop on a streetcar and go to the Y, all by themselves. In this city a child can gain freedom and learn responsibility gradually.

We who live in this city know that, contrary to what people outside a city think, the scale of city living is small, it is intimate. We know that neighbours, be they residential, institutional or commercial, depend on one another to maintain the integrity of the fabric of our neighbourhoods. We know that this city is not a suburb writ large or writ dense, but a much more complex and, I would say, beautiful organism. Our needs and our priorities are different from those of suburban entities, and we need those differences. They are worth preserving for our sakes and for the sakes of our children.

I believe our local governments have been instrumental in allowing us to preserve the differences that exist between urban and suburban entities. I believe it is futile and foolish to try to blend both types of entities into one. It just won't work. Like oil and water, one will float, the other sink.

But I should put aside now the issue of the difficulties of mixing urban and suburban governance, because this legislation is about more than just that.

I confessed earlier to being nervous about speaking here. Well, I have another confession to make: I'm confused. I find it impossible to think about Bill 103 without considering also the measures that were proposed at the same time: legislation affecting schools and the proposals for changing revenues and responsibilities for municipalities. This package of changes is so large, complex, far-reaching and ill-thought-out that I think it is dangerous and foolhardy to try to do it all in such a short time frame.

I have many questions still, and I hope you will consider some of the questions I have and try to answer them for yourselves before you amend and vote on Bill 103. These are some of my questions:

Why this amalgamation? I haven't read one thing that convinces me that it is necessary or desirable. The often-touted cost savings and supposed efficiencies simply have not been proven.

Why is this recommendation for amalgamation even being considered without any concrete legislative proposals for an overall restructuring of the GTA?

How can it make sense to amalgamate before the regional proposals are clearly spelled out? What's the rush? Why is it so important to change our local government so radically, so quickly?

What happened to the Golden report? No one in the government has explained why some of the fundamental recommendations of the Golden report are being ignored.

What happened to the Crombie report? No one in the government has explained why some of the fundamental recommendations of the Crombie report are being ignored.

Where are the studies, the expert opinions, the research papers that support this legislation? On a matter of great importance, I don't think any of us should just take the government's word as proof.

Those questions relate to Bill 103, but as I said before, I am struck by the interconnectedness of this bill and Bill 104 and the proposed changes in revenues and responsibilities for municipalities. About these, I urge you to consider and to try to answer the following questions before proceeding with Bill 103:

Why should school boards be changed in a way that would cause all Metro residents to be left with part-time trustees, each of whom will have to represent more than 100,000 residents?

Why should I be willing to let the province take over the funding of Toronto's educational system when they won't even talk about what level of funding they're considering?

How can the government ignore the advice of expert after expert about the perils of funding social programs from property taxes? How dare they threaten our city that way?

In this morning's *Globe and Mail* I read that, according to information provided by a senior finance ministry official, the province has overlooked \$911 million in annual spending costs, costs which will fall into the laps of municipalities. Is this an oversight or is it a calculated deception? Either way, tell me why any of us should believe any of your figures when such a large sum has been overlooked.

I've confessed to you my nervousness about being here and my confusion about the bundling together of all these measures and the lack of answers and explanations from the government. I have one last confession: I am furious. I am furious on two counts.

First of all, I've never seen a government act with such disregard for its citizens or make proposals which show such disrespect for the democratic process, which I have assumed to be the underpinning of our society. To disempower our duly elected officials by placing them under the jurisdiction of provincially appointed trustees, to disempower our elected school trustees and place such sweeping power in the hands of, again, provincially appointed members of an Education Improvement Commission are, I believe, radical acts which demonstrate contempt for our locally elected officials and the people who elected them. It has been said that the government will disregard municipal referendum results. To be left voiceless makes me furious.

But mostly I'm furious because I believe that this whole jumble of proposed changes threatens my children.

My children go to the local public school, where they've been fortunate to receive an excellent education. Their American cousins could not go to their local public schools. My children take part in wonderful recreational programs at our local community centre. Their American cousins have no such programs. My children live in a big city that is safe. Their American cousins have no such safe city. My children can use the public transit system. Their American cousins cannot. My children live in a society which still retains a degree of social cohesiveness which their American cousins have never known.

With all due respect, I believe the jumble of changes proposed, of which Bill 103 is only a part, threatens the quality of life my children will experience here in the city. We all know what happened in those US cities when people like me started to fear for their children.

I urge you to find real answers to the questions I've posed here. I urge you to take the time to explain the answers to the people. I urge you to delay any decisions about amalgamation until there is in place concrete legislation which spells out the restructuring of the entire GTA. I urge you to forget about party loyalty and use some real common sense.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Droney. You've gone a bit beyond your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward this morning and making a presentation.

#### MARGARET SIMPSON

**The Chair:** Would Margaret Simpson please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Margaret Simpson:** Thank you very much. Hello. My name is Margaret Simpson, and I am a citizen, Ontarian, Torontonian by birth and currently an East Yorker by choice of residency. I greet this committee today, my family greets this committee today and my ancestors greet this committee today, because today myself and my history have come to voice in the strongest possible terms opposition to Bill 103's method of eliminating local, duly elected, city and borough representative government.

My understanding of and continuing respect for this form of grass-roots, democratic governing is based on the collective past experiences and nurturing teaching examples of my ancestors, tutors and present-day family members. For over 160 years, my family has believed in, fought for, assisted, publicly supported, participated in and listened to local citizen-elected governments in this country, this province, the city of Toronto and now today in the borough of East York.

Our family's belief in the democratic tradition of the right to vote and govern our own communities has been a continuing resource for good judgement as we have faced quality-of-life issues as responsible citizens. Time and time again our knowledge that we indeed had a right to discussion, debate and options in the affairs that concerned us helped to make our requests to and working relationships with government realistic and reasonable.

However, on December 17, 1996, that belief, that tradition, that cooperation died. On that day, this Harris government imposed on the citizen-elected local councils of five cities and the borough of East York and the municipal government of Metropolitan Toronto an

appointed trusteeship to "oversee the financial affairs" without meaningful citizenship consultation and without electoral consent. Why? What had these municipal councils done wrong?

Their governing records show them committing no acts of misconduct to warrant the magnitude of this move or not being able to run their own affairs. My family and myself were insulted. This single act of the Harris government held in contempt our civic tradition and held to ransom the creditability of our civil rights. Gone was what I understood as elected local borough government in East York. Gone was what I understood as local government in Ontario.

**0920**

Good government is about the needs of the people truly mattering, and those same needs being serviced with care. To rush through major governing changes with no citizen debate, no citizen input and no means of citizen appeal is both a dictatorial and a rash act. This is not an act of good governing in any way.

In addition, to give to a politically appointed, non-citizen-appeal board of trustees the right to "oversee the financial affairs" of a duly elected local government and its reserve monetary funds needed to service local residents is not a democratic act nor a citizen-friendly one. For many Ontarians, the first working step to determining the best path for resolving their quality-of-life issues is still to bring them to and request financial means of servicing those issues from our local city or borough governments.

At this point, when I first worked on my presentation to this committee, I had composed from researching, reading, listening to current debate and my experience as a participant in local government for over 35 years a definition of "local government" to read to you. However, yesterday — Tuesday, February 11 — I felt as part of my research I should also go to Publications Ontario on Bay Street to pick up and look at the current information being endorsed and distributed by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs about local government in Ontario, its definition and its responsibilities. I went to the display shelves and found this booklet entitled Welcome to Local Government in Ontario. This booklet is published by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Intergovernmental Committee on Urban and Regional Research.

I would like to read the definition of local government and its responsibilities as explained in this booklet and enter with my submission a copy of this currently distributed literature.

"Local government is responsible for matters which affect the local area, such as: police and fire protection; schools; libraries; parks and recreation facilities; planning new neighbourhoods; garbage collection and disposal; roads and sidewalks. Why is local government responsible for so many important services? Because local government is close to the people it serves. It knows what the local community's needs are and how best to meet them."

I realized this definition was tragically misinforming anyone who read it because, as of December 17, 1996, with a provincially appointed board of trustees as financial overseers for the seven existing municipal and local governments in Metropolitan Toronto and accountable

only to the Harris government, not all local governments in Ontario are now being treated equally. This is a more serious omission of fact because it is essential information to the understanding of local government in Ontario, and it is being omitted in the current information endorsed and distributed by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs by their own agent, Publications Ontario.

I became more concerned when I read the booklet's explanation as to who it considered its readership to be: "This book has been prepared to help newcomers to Ontario, their teachers and councillors, immigrant aid agencies, schools and other non-profit groups which assist newcomers. It will also be useful to people who are looking for an introduction to local government, how it works, and the services it provides."

This book is available in 11 different, English and another, language combinations. I realized I knew an important sector of this readership. During a period of almost two years, I taught people between the ages of 16 and 24 in Toronto. The majority of them had English as a second language. I taught them business communication aids so they could go out and compete for jobs with more language and appropriate workplace skills. These people fall into the booklet's readership category, and it is not fair to mislead them and create more barriers when they are trying so hard to understand a new culture. If they choose residency within the seven areas of local government now under trusteeship, they will not receive the same servicing from that local government that has its financial affairs controlled by a non-elected board of trustees.

**The Chair:** Ms Simpson, you are coming towards the end of your time. I know we all have the submission in front of us. I wonder if you could maybe wrap up in some way.

**Ms Simpson:** I will do that. Thank you very much. I will just end with a couple of more paragraphs.

I also looked for the publication date and found it on page 3 of the preface, and I quote: "Please note: The information in this book was first prepared in January 1988 and updated in July 1991. For more current information, you should contact your municipality or the provincial agency that is responsible."

I went to the service desk of the official provincial agency for the distribution of Ontario government literature and asked, "Is this your current information on local government in Ontario?" The response was yes. This circulating of information to newcomers with cultural diversity that misleads and outright contradicts our reality must stop.

I would like to thank the committee and urge the parliamentarians today as strongly as I can to advise the Harris government to stop further passage of Bill 103. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Simpson, for coming forward this morning.

*Applause.*

SHAWN KERWIN

**The Chair:** Would Shawn Kerwin please come forward.

Ladies and gentlemen, some of you probably have not attended hearings before, but I have to remind you that the rules of the Legislature apply to committee rooms, and participation from audiences is not allowed, whether it be clapping or commenting and so forth. I'd appreciate if you'd respect those rules and keep that to a minimum.

Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes this morning to make your presentation.

**Ms Shawn Kerwin:** Good morning and thank you. I appreciate being given the opportunity to address this committee and present some of my concerns regarding Bill 103.

I have been a resident of Metropolitan Toronto for over half my life. My profession as a freelance theatre designer has allowed me the privilege to live and work in other cities, such as London, England, Chicago and New York and, in this country, literally from one coast to the other. Although I have been given many opportunities to settle and work in other places, I continue to return to Toronto. I have recently become a first-time property owner in the downtown area.

In preparing to address you today, I have spent much time trying to answer a simple question: Why do I always return to Toronto? There are many answers to this question, and it has been very difficult to narrow down the reasons to the ones I will present to you today.

What is it that makes Toronto so different, so desirable to me? Certainly many other cities offer cultural riches, geographical beauty, professional opportunities and stimulating communities in which to live, work and raise families. Why does Toronto hold my heart over these cities?

My first answer to that question is the following: Toronto maintains a very delicate balance between being both large and small, a scale which can include local neighbourhood communities as well as the international community. What is special about Toronto is not the ability to give one preference over the other, but the ability for these two elements to coexist. From my experiences in other cities, I have seen it proven over and over again that this balancing act is not a common occurrence, and we should not take this aspect of our city for granted for one moment.

I fear that Bill 103 threatens this balance in its attempt to rob citizens of their locally elected representatives. There has been talk of one mayor, one council being more efficient. I would beg to differ. I have yet to find any real evidence that has proven that one larger megagovernment will be more cost-effective than our current smaller local governments. I have not found one success story anywhere in North America that would support this kind of forced amalgamation. In fact, it would seem to me that at the present moment in our country's history, much effort is being put into trying to decentralize the federal government in order to allow the provinces more control over their own futures. Surely it would just be better to do away with provincial government altogether in order to consolidate, in order to be efficient.

0930

To replace seven councils and seven different kinds of voices with one single voice suggests to me a lack of respect for the strength and value of our differences and

a blind commitment to creating a level of bureaucracy to be forced on to the citizens of Metro's six cities without consideration, collaboration or concern for dialogue.

How can this be possible? How can any of us — government, opposition or citizens — trust that forcing amalgamation and reducing the number of elected representatives to serve Metro's communities can be a positive step towards a healthy future? It would seem to me that the goal of this bill would be to cut the heart out of one of Metro's greatest assets, and that is its diversity and flexibility. Why is this government so determined to consider this an inefficient expenditure rather than a unique, valuable strength?

The government can easily argue that its plans to force amalgamation will continue to protect Metro's flexibility and diversity. I disagree. Not only will the decrease in elected representation across Metro make it harder for local concerns to be both heard and responded to, but it is in direct contrast to some of the government's own recommendations on the need for local voices to have authority.

I would like to quote from information obtained off the government's Web site regarding municipalities in northern Ontario: "In 1996, the government gave authority to municipalities in northern Ontario, counties, and cities to decide how they are structured, their boundaries and how many levels of government they need." It states further down the same page, "This new regional restructuring process will be based on an existing process that allows for locally initiated structural change in counties and in the north."

If only the government showed the same commitment and regard for the local councils in Metro.

We are promised the lure of local volunteer neighbourhood committees to ensure that our local concerns are heard. I can assure you that I face this room today as a volunteer from a neighbourhood trying to raise concerns to this committee. The government has made it quite clear that it does not want to acknowledge my concerns, nor those of the many others who have stated over and over again that your plans are wrongheaded. Does this set the tone for the future working of the megacity?

I would love to trust this government to guide Metro and the province towards the 21st century. However, for the first time in my life, I distrust a government totally. Appointed trustees at this very moment have enormous powers, and yet Bill 103 is not yet law. After the bill is passed, voting boundaries will be redrawn, reducing the amount of time available to prepare for an extremely important municipal election. Yesterday's paper reported that there was some question as to whether a November election could proceed on schedule.

After the election, a transition team will have enormous power and influence over many changes to our way of life. The decisions made by these unelected people will not be able to be challenged in court. Can this really be happening?

The issue here is not a reluctance to change, but a reluctance to trust this government's process of change. To be faced with change in the authoritarian manner that this government is showing in trying to force Bill 103 through in such limited time, as well as with the huge

combined impact of Bill 104 and the downloading of provincial services on to municipalities throughout this province, is simply irresponsible.

I am a gardener. When I want to put a new plant in my garden, I look at it as an investment not only in the plant but in the garden as a whole. In order to integrate this new plant into the garden, I need to make a place for it. I could dig a hole with my trowel, or I could place three sticks of dynamite in the ground and light the fuse. In both cases, I will have a new space for my plant. However, it is not difficult to see that one system of planting is vastly wiser than the other and will have greater long-term benefits. Why is this government so determined to use dynamite as the only solution in this garden of Metropolitan Toronto? I would like to remind you that the delicate, invisible roots spreading in many directions are what continue to support the plant and to ensure its life.

There is much talk of the bottom line. I understand what the bottom line means, and it is much more than the columns of figures and tidy sums endlessly quoted to the people of this province over and over. It is the need for people to feel that their elected government respects them and will listen.

This government has repeatedly stated that it will ignore the results of any of the upcoming referendums, that some of these referendums are rigged and illegal, a waste of taxpayers' money. However, if the results of the referendum showed an overwhelming support for amalgamation, would the government continue to ignore the results? I wonder. Perhaps the government should ask itself why so many people are spending time, money and effort, many like myself for the first time in our lives, trying to arrest Bill 103's crushing implications.

I feel privileged to live in this country and in this city. I hope I can continue to say that I feel privileged to live in this province. I urge the government to listen, to allow change and not to force change. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Kerwin, for your presentation. Unfortunately, you've exhausted your time for your presentation.

#### DOUGLAS PERRY

**The Chair:** Would Doug Perry please come forward. Good morning, Mr Perry, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Douglas Perry:** Good morning to the members of the committee and all present. My name is Douglas Perry. I am pleased to come before you this morning to present my views on Bill 103. I'm aware, however, that as the second reading of the bill has passed, these hearings may actually have little influence on the members of the government, those members who actually determine policy and draft legislation. What influence they do have, however, is the responsibility of the Conservative members present.

No doubt you have heard much about the city of Toronto and what its citizens feel about its proposed demise. I will begin my presentation with a discussion of something quite different from cities. I would like to begin by talking about the wetlands.

When talking to my children about the concept of the interconnectedness of things, I often use the wetlands to

illustrate a number of significant qualities and facts. In the wetlands, there is virtually an infinite number of organisms living and functioning together: growing, eating, dying, decaying, on and on. It provides us with a brilliant example of an ecosystem at work, a system whose complexities are far beyond our present comprehension. The interconnectedness of all the organisms and their interspecies relationships are a marvel to observe. But what has taken hundreds of years to develop, to evolve, can be rent asunder in a single afternoon.

The reforms proposed in Bill 103, to continue to use the wetlands analogy, are similar perhaps to an idea that would have us draining a wetland to install some new high-tech water management system, then pouring the water back in and expecting that not only will all the living things return but that this new improved model will outperform the previous one.

I will talk later about my professional and volunteer affiliations, but at this moment I am speaking to you as a private citizen. I rather like the juxtaposition of these two words and enjoy calling myself this, as in the current political mindset the words "public," "public good," "public interest" and "public servants" are gaining a rather negative connotation. But you who are sitting around this table are public servants and, as elected officials, responsible to the public.

While the cutting of politicians in Metro from over 100 to 44 may appear to strike a favourable chord with some people, does this not actually show that people are extremely frustrated with politicians themselves? The fact that politicians consistently disappoint and distort reality to serve their ends is no reason to make government even more élitist.

The number of problems to be dealt with in a megacity will not diminish. Are we not simply trading politicians who are accountable to the public for bureaucrats who are accountable only to their superiors? This action cuts off the access of the citizens to their government representatives, which of course for some politicians is a step in the right direction.

I posed my first question in a public forum to Lester B. Pearson; the issue, nuclear disarmament. Now, 30 years later, the tireless work of thousands of world citizens is paying off in that area. At that same time, bureaucrats and politicians had the brilliant idea to extend the Spadina Expressway down to the water. Again, the tireless work of volunteer citizens stopped this dead in its tracks and we all today enjoy the benefit of their labours. Just stop to think what this city would be like if there was an expressway dissecting it north to south.

0940

This government has failed miserably to provide its citizens with any real, detailed information on just how this is a good thing, how the transfer of soft services to municipalities will not leave the urban organism prone to bankruptcy. These citizens have been chastised by the government for standing up and speaking out about these proposed reforms.

The year is 2003. Canada is in its second year of a massive world recession. The city's jobless rate stands at 17%, the welfare ranks are exploding, health care costs are radically up. Property taxes rise accordingly, forcing

some people in businesses to leave town, close up shop, board up their windows. The city tries to borrow money, first from the PC-created municipal slush fund. They call, but nobody answers. Then they try to get money from the guys in New York: "No way. We don't lend to cities. We tried that before and we lost." What happens next? Do you have any answers for this scenario other than, "Oh, it couldn't happen here"?

Mastermind Al Leach refers to Chicago and New York as shining examples of how Leachville can work. I travel a lot as a performer, so I must ask, does he ever go outside the Marriott hotels he stays in? Those cities are barely working and not at all user-friendly. New York has already tasted bankruptcy, and Chicago, aside from being a very dangerous city to live in, has had one family in the mayor's chair for over 30 years. Is this where we're headed, to 44 city warlords?

The government is telling the people, "Trust us." Every study but the most recent two-week report commissioned by the government says this idea is a bad idea. The board of trade says no, Crombie says no, financial institutions say no, the people of Hamilton-Wentworth have voted no, Jane Jacobs says no, the people coming before you say no, even some backbenchers have been feeling the heat. Who is saying yes?

You say you know better. You say you can't give any details about how it will actually work, that that's the job of the transition team, when you finally get around to appointing them. You fail to give any details on how much it will cost. You want to make the change now and you will fill in the blanks later. It's like buying a house that the purchaser can't see, can't find out how much it will cost, what the borrowing rate is, can't even get a guarantee that it has four walls and a roof. You're asking us to sign on the dotted line and buy in. All you can say is, "Believe us."

The PC ruling party was elected with 43% of the popular vote and now needs some cool, hard cash to pay for its proposed tax break. How to do this is simple.

Step 1: Grab the big line item on the budget — education.

Step 2: Balance the ledger; offset the grab with a downloading of soft services.

Step 3: Force amalgamation to try to make this whole ill-conceived idea work.

I've spoken in general about Bill 103 and have not yet discussed the concerns of my specific community. I didn't want to appear like a special interest representative, though I am specially interested in many things. I think this is a good thing. I'm a musician. I performed most recently with the Canadian Opera Company, and with a wide variety of popular stars on the CBC and in the recording industry. I sit on the board of directors of Harbourfront Centre, I'm on the board of the Toronto Arts Council, I'm the president of the Recording Musicians Association, Toronto chapter, and a member of the steering committee of ArtsVote. I'm also a founder of DERT, Democracy's Emergency Relief Team.

The cultural sector employs, either directly or indirectly, over 220,000 people. Over 90% of the money spent on culture is spent in the city of Toronto, for the good of all the citizens of Toronto, Metro, the province, our

country and the world. The revenues generated are enormous. The investment pays big dividends. But if you think the wetlands are a complex, sensitively balanced ecosystem, then take a look at the cultural sector. While it consistently outperforms other sectors, it has suffered enormous cuts, almost 30% of its funding being extracted in the last few years.

Artists live in a world of change. Their expertise in dealing with constant change is profound, but there is a limit. If this pond is drained completely, what we have built up over many decades will just disappear. The artists won't die; they will relocate. Believe me, this is already happening. The exodus has begun. First the artists go, then the businesses, then the residents. Is there any question why the arts community is concerned with having only 14 out of 44 councillors to represent their concerns in a new megacity council?

Multilevel funding, rather than being seen as just a duplication of services, allows the different levels of government to set unique priorities and address specific issues that are important to their constituents. The move towards bigger and more centralized government simply reduces the public's accessibility to its government. Why not consider taking the reduction to the extreme and do away with municipal, provincial and federal levels of government and just let one person do the job? No duplication of services there.

I urge the members of the Conservative Party present here today to go back to their superiors in caucus and insist that they review Bill 103, that they listen to the people who are coming forth and withdraw the bill immediately, and then continue to work with all those people who have come forward to guarantee that this city remains the best city in the world to live. For I warn you that if Toronto falters, it will take all of Ontario with it. I personally will hold every member of this government responsible for the consequences of their actions.

Thank you for your time.

**The Chair:** Thank you for coming forward today and making your presentation.

#### WILLIAM PHILLIPS

**The Chair:** Would William Phillips please come forward. Good morning, Mr Phillips. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr William Phillips:** Thank you, Mr Chairman, members of the committee. By way of introduction, I was born in Collingwood, Ontario, and moved to Toronto when I was seven years old and was educated in the city of Toronto. Then, when I was married, I moved to East York, raised my two daughters there, became heavily involved in the community of East York and became a trustee on the school board of East York from 1972 to 1985. Then I moved to Harbourfront and became very involved in the Harbourfront community, as secretary-treasurer of the Harbourfront residents' association, trying to protect some of the harbourfront for public use from being built on totally. Then I moved up north of Bloor-Sherbourne into the Rosedale area, became involved in the Rosedale community. I'm currently secretary of the South Rosedale Ratepayers' Association.

I say that to suggest to you that I have some experience in terms of neighbourhoods and communities and elected organizations.

The replacement of the two-tier government of Metropolitan Toronto with one megacity is exactly the opposite direction from what the provincial government should be travelling. Virtually all significant studies and commissions have recommended the strengthening of the local, most immediate level of municipal government in Metropolitan Toronto — the cities of Toronto, North York, Scarborough, Etobicoke and York and the borough of East York — and the reduction of the responsibilities of the second tier, the more remote Metropolitan Toronto council.

The creation of a supercity will inevitably have three very negative results:

(1) An inevitable increase in municipal bureaucracy and higher costs for services. A recent study, Local and Regional Governance in the Greater Toronto Area: A Review of Alternatives, prepared for the city of Toronto, January 10, 1997, by Wendell Cox Consultancy, clearly illustrates the correlation between increased size of municipalities and increased costs. Any member of this committee who has not studied this report should do so immediately. May I point out to you that Wendell Cox is a very conservative type of consultant in terms of his fiscal views.

(2) Local government that is less accessible and less responsive to the people it is supposed to represent will be an outcome, a negative result of the megacity. One has only to compare the interaction between citizens and their local councils with the lack of interaction between citizens and Metro council. The remoteness of the Metropolitan council was increased when direct elections were introduced. It became more difficult for citizens to run for office in the large wards and there were even several acclamations. Furthermore, Metro council has been either unable or unwilling to control its spending, while the local municipalities have avoided tax increases over the past several years.

**0950**

I've had several opportunities to go to Metro council to advocate positions on behalf of my community, and the difference between going to Metro council and going to the city of Toronto council is like night and day. You have to be in the position of having done that to realize what a bad idea it is to amalgamate the whole of Metro Toronto and expect to get responsiveness to neighbourhood needs and community needs.

(3) The destruction of the political balance within the province of Ontario. A unified megacity replacing Metropolitan Toronto and its local municipalities will overwhelm the greater Toronto area and provide a major combatant to the provincial government. The opportunity to provide a workable GTA coordination mechanism will be lost and the competition between the new megacity and the outer GTA will be very destructive to both areas. I think Hazel McCallion is very aware of the results of doing this.

The transition to the new city of Toronto is undemocratic and unworkable for the following reasons. The board of trustees, not being elected officials, will be

resented if they try to interfere in any way with the decisions of the elected members of the local or Metro councils. The current members on local and Metro councils have been elected by the citizens to govern their affairs and are quite capable of doing so. Many of them will no doubt be running for office in the next election, no matter what the political structure. To autocratically appoint bureaucrats to oversee them is an affront to democracy.

The transition team, not being elected officials, will create a bureaucracy which may not be responsive to the new city of Toronto council to take office in 1998. Since they have not been elected to undertake such a task, they can hardly represent the citizens who will be affected by their decisions. It would be far better to delay the amalgamation for one year, continue the present council members in office for 1998 and elect a new council to undertake the reorganization to take effect on January 1, 1999, or even 2000, given the complexity of the tasks they will need to complete.

This was the type of mechanism that was used when Metro council was set up. The council was elected before it came into effect and was put in charge of making the necessary arrangements. That seems to be a reasonable, democratic pattern or precedent to follow, and I cannot imagine why the government would ignore that type of thing. It works, and I can't see this working.

The board of trustees and the transition team are to be above the law. I find it offensive that the decisions of the board of trustees and the transition team are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court and that the Statutory Powers Procedure Act does not apply, especially since these autocrats have not even been elected to perform the duties assigned to them. Under the provisions of Bill 103, democracy will no longer be a part of the governance structure of my city.

I know that certain bodies are exempted from review by the courts and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, but the transition team and the trustees are replacing elected officials who are accountable to having their decisions reviewed by the courts and are governed by the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. To take elected people who are under these strictures and replace them by non-elected people who aren't is absolutely ludicrous.

These drastic changes were never even hinted at by the so-called Common Sense Revolution. The actions announced during mega-week run counter to everything that was promised to the people of my city during the last provincial election; thus I will never forgive the Harris government for this act of deceit.

In my community of Rosedale, our member there, the Honourable — ahem, honourable, yes — Al Leach said he would resign if his government brought in market value assessment. There's no doubt that this AVA he's talking about is market value assessment since it's mid-1986 that the market value is set at. Maybe he doesn't quite live up to the standard set by Sheila Copps. It's too bad he wouldn't put himself forward to the test.

Thank you very much. I'll be glad to answer any questions.

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Mr Silipo, you have about one minute.

**Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt):** Mr Phillips, it is your suggestion to delay the elections for a year as one way out of this morass. It's certainly something that others have mentioned. Could you talk a little more about that? The other side of the coin is the concern some people have that it is just another way of continuing the undemocratic process; that these people were elected for a certain time and now you're suggesting that they should continue for another year.

**Mr Phillips:** For instance, if instead of having an election for the new city to take effect immediately this fall, you said, "We're going to extend the term of the current council," which has been elected, "for a year and we will elect the new council and give them the task of putting together this new city," that would at least have the semblance of a democratic process. We could elect people who would represent us to do that, rather than some faceless bureaucrats that somebody else is going to appoint. Certainly these people who put together the new city would at least have to run in the next election and be accountable if they did not do a good job. That's democracy.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing before our committee.

#### JOAN ROBERTS

**The Vice-Chair:** I call on Joan Roberts, please. Good morning, Ms Roberts, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Joan Roberts:** Good morning. My name is Joan Roberts. I'm the city councillor for ward 4 and the deputy mayor in the city of York. I am not here to save my job but to do my job. I'm speaking on my own behalf.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my concerns over Bill 103 to this government. I came here today to present my questions and concerns regarding this legislation. There seems to be so much information missing from this bill that when my constituents ask me for information, I have none to give them. How are we to address their concerns when we can't get answers to our questions? How can anyone make an informed decision? Maybe you can help answer these questions:

What's the rush? Why are we hurrying to eliminate a form of government that has been around for 200 years?

What are the problems this legislation is supposed to solve? The proposals made by your government strike in every direction and are often contradictory.

Is the uncertainty and chaos of the megacity legislation good for business? Does it create a job-producing environment?

From 1992 to 1994 I chaired our land use committee. When development was very busy and people wanted to expedite their development applications, usually lost in the black hole of Metro Toronto's bureaucracy, I used to advise people to walk their applications around Metro from department to department. It was the only way to save three months in a development application.

What will the planning process in the megacity look like? Why are you making bureaucracy bigger when you want to expedite development activity? Doesn't big bureaucracy mean more red tape, not less? How will neighbours and communities have input into the planning

process? Will they have to go downtown for Planning Act meetings? What happens to all the community-based planning processes we have initiated? We have hundreds of people involved.

Everything I've read in this decade about economic development says partnerships are the way to go to solve our problems in public life. How is a mega-government going to create public-private sector partnerships when all the elected officials are downtown, each one of them having to face a schedule akin to that of what our mayors now follow? How are politicians going to provide leadership to solve community problems if they are rarely in their community?

#### 1000

Our council has been at the forefront of creating public-private sector processes to facilitate problem-solving. One of them that I chaired is the community economic development advisory committee which created a plan to revitalize our local economy. The person over here on my right was a member. It's good to see Ruth once again. People from all over Metro Toronto participated in that. We've also been very effective in dealing with crime hot spots because of our special crime committee started by our former mayor.

All of these processes involve private sector business, the community and all levels of government, except for Metro's economic development department, which does not see the benefit in this approach to problem-solving. So we've got federal and provincial participation but Metro chooses not to. What will happen to all this social capital we have mobilized in our community?

Everyone before me has spoken about the impact of downloading. I will not dwell upon it now, but I want to know how our quality of life will improve if our city loses its middle class. How will we move to more community-based policing if we don't have community leadership any more?

Does getting rid of politicians deal with the problem we have, which is a loss of faith in our politicians to provide effective government? I don't think so. How will a 45-person council provide leadership when council meetings will go on for days at a time? When will politicians get into their communities if they have to provide the work that is now done by both local and Metro councillors and, if I might add, school trustees?

Who will sit on the committees that make things happen? These are the committees that feed into every standing committee of municipal government and all the special purpose boards that politicians are appointed to, from the children's aid society to the CNE to every municipality's social service agencies, district health councils, boards of health, long-term-care coordinating boards, hospital boards, licensing commissions, library boards and ad hoc committees that are set up every week to deal with the latest problem to surface.

What will the political scene look like in the megacity? Will there be tax receipts for campaign donations to politicians who run? Who will run for school boards on a measly salary of \$5,000 per year? Our separate school trustee represents the entire city of York, 140,000 people. It's an impossible task. Five thousand dollars wouldn't cover the cost of an election campaign in one ward in the

city of York, let alone mega-wards. How will ethnic groups break into local politics? How will this proposal facilitate more women running for public office? How will anybody without party backing run in a megacity ward and have a reasonable chance of winning?

Is the megacity a first step in a city-state? What's a city-state? How do we live in one? How is having two levels of government replaced with three levels downsizing? How is having fewer politicians in a closed system of local government making government more effective? How is handing more power to bureaucrats making government more responsive to people?

The legislation proposes neighbourhood committees to keep up local involvement in the community, but I've heard they've all but disappeared in Winnipeg's unicity and have become dominated by special interest groups in Halifax. Is business a special interest group? With no salary involved, who's going to be interested in serving on these neighbourhood committees in an era of contracting out and privatization? How will this legislation prevent corruption from dominating local politics?

Where is citizen input and involvement? What happens to all the volunteers who are running things like museums and special purpose boards? Does grass-roots activism have no value any more?

Will the megacity be better at providing service to local communities? How? Will we have to go downtown when we want service? How will we get a building permit or pay our hydro bill? How do we maintain relationships in our community that have evolved into formalized projects, like EnviroWorks, a partnership between the city of York, the local hydro commission and other utilities to foster energy conservation?

How will we retain our special services geared to our special needs community?

Will local politicians be expected to take complaints on welfare cheats? Some people are expecting that now.

What will happen to social housing? Will our safe, healthy non-profits and co-ops be so starved for funds that they will deteriorate into the public housing projects built in the 1960s?

What should I tell the social service agencies that exist only because of municipal government funding in my city about their prospects for funding next year under the megacity? Will they get funding next year, or should I tell them to shut down now?

How will progressiveness be built into the property tax system to allow for natural demographic trends that will increase the load on services like long-term care?

How will the megacity maintain and enforce all the legal agreements we are signatory to, from development agreements to cash-in-lieu-of parking agreements?

What will happen to our community's assets: the cash, the artwork, buildings, projects, festivals, identities and museum inventory?

How should I explain the tax burden shift that will occur from commercial-industrial to residential taxpayers to our ratepayers' associations? This will occur because of the removal of business occupancy tax and the ability to implement special taxation classes to favour business.

What will happen to our prioritized capital request lists?

What happens to our international partnership with a city in El Salvador that is financed by the federal government?

At the very least, the public deserves answers. Your government promised common sense. Common sense says you don't pretend things are simple when they're not. It's also common sense that people will eventually find out the truth. People with common sense will know that errors of omission are as much lies as deliberate misrepresentations. It is foolhardy to begin a journey without knowing the destination. You may want to take that trip, but at the very least, you owe the 2.3 million people you are forcibly taking along for the ride some explanations: Where are we being taken, how will we get there and what will it cost? It is not enough to say that we should trust you. As you have pointed out on a number of occasions, politicians are rarely to be trusted. I have to answer to my constituents; you should answer to them as well.

#### *Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Thank you very much, Ms Roberts. You've effectively used your full time for presentation. I want to thank you for coming forward this morning.

#### BRUCE BRYER

**The Chair:** Would Bruce Bryer please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Bruce Bryer:** Good morning. I am Bruce Bryer. I'm a resident of West Hill and an employee of the Toronto Transit Commission.

The government is showing great vision and doing the right thing by proceeding in a timely way with amalgamation and in keeping its promise to reduce one of the unnecessary tiers of municipal government. Bill 103 is a necessary, splendid part of the Common Sense Revolution, unrivalled in the province's history.

Premier Harris, on June 8, 1995, we the people gave you a mandate to change much of what was wrong with government. You have kept your promise and your word. For that, we the people owe you a debt of gratitude.

The amalgamation of the city of Toronto is no accident. It was born out of a legacy of waste, excessive duplication of services, overtaxation, political parochialism, lack of vision and an absence of city-wide planning and coordination by the municipal governments. For example, when a fire breaks out, God forbid, on Victoria Park Avenue, which is at the boundary of three fire departments, just who rescues you?

Roads ending at boundary lines are the direct result of political disagreement and a lack of continuity. Examples of this are the Allen Expressway and Lawrence Avenue East at Bayview Avenue. Discontinued roads exist due to political parochialism. A good example of this is the Gardiner east, which is incomplete. Political gridlock by municipal politicians has contributed to this deadlock.

#### 1010

My colleague James Alcock, an urban transportation consultant, and I have co-authored a report entitled Transportation Improvements Needed for the Greater Toronto Area. We urge reforms to roads, the TTC, and

the inception of a ring road system, which has a missing link in the east due to political disagreement. We strongly urge the construction of a bluffs roadway, which would be a scenic boulevard along the bottom of the Scarborough Bluffs, lined with parks, beaches and marinas connected to the east of the Gardiner Expressway via a suspension bridge rivalling the Golden Gate Bridge of San Francisco and connected to Highway 401 and Pickering. It was a 1923 vision of Norman D. Wilson, a traffic consultant to the TTC. It was endorsed by Metro's first chairman, Fred Gardiner, in 1954. It was set aside in favour of a Scarborough expressway which never materialized and has now been abandoned by Metro. Now, with amalgamation, it is our only chance to revive our only option, the bluffs roadway, creating more jobs and getting rid of through traffic congestion. Our report is endorsed by Sam Cass, retired commissioner of Metro roads, and Crawford Smyth, retired commissioner of the TTC.

Amalgamation will provide a Metro-wide council with visionary planning for the whole area; not a number of municipalities which bicker among themselves. In fact, partial amalgamation occurred in 1967, when 13 boroughs dropped to six. And those municipalities — Leaside, Forest Hill, Weston, New Toronto, Mimico, Long Branch and Swansea — have survived and are now distinct communities with strong neighbourhoods, one more convincing reason to move to total amalgamation.

#### *Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Excuse me. Whether you're in favour of or against a presenter, I'm not tolerating interjections from the audience. The gentlemen behind, can you please cease, and anyone else, whether you're in favour or against, people have the right to make their presentations uninterrupted. I want everyone to keep those interjections to themselves. Thank you.

**Mr Bryer:** With amalgamation, the existing six cities will still retain their distinctive neighbourhoods and their identities, as proven with the seven that were amalgamated in 1967.

The way the councils are now is that they are out of touch with the people because of political allegiance, and not much is accomplished. With amalgamation, the politicians will be doing more for the people and having to perform by staying in touch with them regularly. Fewer politicians means they must perform effectively or they will be voted out of office.

In 1953, when Metro was first formed, amalgamation was the plan by the city of Toronto, but it didn't happen because the other boroughs objected. Fred Gardiner brought in a compromise, the Metro federation. Some 40 years later, most people agree it is not working. Going back to independent cities is fragmentation and would not work. The only option open to us is to proceed with amalgamation because the other options have not worked.

The city of Toronto will then be a truly world-class city that is not only competitive globally but becomes a central trading partner on the world stage, creating and attracting investment and growth capital with vital business links, a tremendous achievement and of benefit to all Ontarians.

I live in West Hill but consider myself to be a citizen of Toronto. I graduated from McMaster University in

1978, and in 1980 I received my bachelor of education degree from the University of Toronto. For the past 16 years I have been employed as a front-line employee with the Toronto Transit Commission. This has given me a unique insight into our transit system. The question I can answers today is, will amalgamation be good for the transit system? The answer is yes, it will.

The last nine years have been particularly troubled years for the TTC. Ridership peaked in 1988 at about 460 million riders and has fallen steadily to about 360 million riders last year. For the TTC is mired in old-fashioned, costly, labour-intensive methods which have driven away all these riders: almost 100 million riders lost, and possibly \$200 million in lost revenues that could have been used to buy new buses, new subway cars, and possibly paid the costs of preventive maintenance for our bus and streetcar fleet. The wasted opportunities to recapture this lost ridership and the millions of dollars in lost revenue are enough to make you weep. What can we do, together, to bring back our riders and recover the millions of dollars in lost revenue? The answer is amalgamation.

With amalgamation we must take two steps. The first step is to look back at the past and determine where we went wrong. The second step is to put in place the necessary reforms to bring back our lost riders and recover our millions of dollars in lost revenue.

Also, we must embrace a word that defined the Common Sense Revolution. That one provocative word was "change" — change not just for the sake of change, but real change, with amalgamation that puts in place a new management that automatically brings with it new ideas, a new vision, a greater focus on the greater Toronto area, and to target that goal of recovering our lost riders and lost revenue.

There are many corporations that fall into this trap where, like the TTC, vision is confined to a sort of backyard mentality, where the focus is limited and not expanded as market forces impact on the need for adaptation to new technologies and shifting demographics that surely dictate major change. In other words, you can't get ahead by standing still.

The Metro councillors of the TTC were unable to see the vision of amalgamation as a greater whole, nor could they expand their horizons and see that the downtown core had left and expanded to the north and the suburbs. This ridership was lost.

Now amalgamation is the opportunity to reach out and embrace our suburban riders and bring them back to the core of the city. Instead of the Toronto transit system servicing an inner core of riders, it will, with amalgamation, service all suburban riders.

I have visited a large number of successful transit systems in North America and Europe. Each one of these transit systems has one common denominator: They all have adopted modern technology to create lean and efficient people-moving systems.

I have produced a report entitled *Toward Self-Sufficiency* for the TTC, in which I have identified savings of from \$50 million to \$60 million by adopting new methods of technology. For those who dispute this, I say take a look at your next-door neighbour. Some of this new technology is in use right now in Ajax.

I have investigated the use of this new technology, and I firmly believe that modern technology, such as a swipe card similar to the prepaid pay-phone pass I am holding, can be easily and quickly implemented here in Toronto. The swipe-card technology is not just cost-efficient; it is commonsense smart. It will produce significant savings and reduce passenger bottlenecks, the same bottlenecks that have driven people back to their cars.

My report is just a sample of the ideas that could be applied to a new Toronto transit system with amalgamation. With amalgamation, we the people together will have changed the management, the leadership, the vision, the direction and, yes, the success of the Toronto transit system. With the application of new technologies, we the people together will have ensured that the Toronto transit system, which is the lifeline to so many good citizens of Toronto, will never be broken.

In the process of amalgamation, the Toronto transit system could become operationally self-sufficient and reclaim its destiny once again. Then it will be said of history that amalgamation was not only exceedingly good, but it was truly beneficial to the Toronto transit system and the good citizens of the city of Toronto.

I can help. You can help. We can all help. Together let's make it. Together let's amalgamate. God bless you, and thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Bryer. You've effectively utilized your full allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### GORDON ROSS

**The Chair:** Would Gordon Ross please come forward. Good morning, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Gordon Ross:** Good morning to the honourable members of the committee. My name is Gordon Ross. I am a resident of the city of Toronto and I live in the neighbourhood of Riverdale. I am a business owner in a firm called ElderTreks, a company that specializes in adventure travel for people 50 and over. We are located on Markham Street in the Annex.

I have lived a good portion of my life in Ontario, but it was only three years ago that I came to Toronto to make my home. Before that, I had set out to see the world on a trip that took four years to complete and took me to over 30 countries. I spent most of my time in the Third World and I witnessed many things, but to the point of these committee hearings, I witnessed whole societies that had few, if any, democratic rights. No matter how difficult things got during my travels, political or otherwise, I always knew that I could quickly and easily return to my home, Canada, a country that in my opinion is one of the greatest on earth.

It is great for many reasons. Foremost among them are democratic freedoms and the plural nature of our society. Canada is a tolerant and cooperative society, one that derives its vibrancy and its legitimacy from allowing people the right to express their views and, to go that further important step, from allowing people their right, through democratic process, to choose their collective destinies.

#### 1020

As I have grown up in this province, I've seen the political landscape change from the Tories under Bill Davis to the Liberals under David Peterson to the NDP under Bob Rae. I do not view our political history with rose-coloured glasses and I will not wax on that these governments epitomized democratic principles or processes. At the end of the day, politics is a raucous affair, one where competing interests yell loudly in the hope of being heard. Yet despite their blemishes, the governments I remember at least gave the impression that they were willing to entertain other people's points of view. The Ontario I remember was based on the spirit of co-operation, compromise and tolerance.

Enter the Harris government and the cracks in Ontario's democratic foundations start to appear. The omnibus bill, Bill 26, portended the direction of this government, and you have lived up to your undemocratic nature in the way you have chosen to deal with Bill 103.

First, you have flatly stated that you will not respect the outcome of the municipal referendums to be held in each of the six municipalities that you plan to amalgamate.

Second, you plan to remove our democratically elected officials with the stroke of a pen and place the finances of 2.3 million people into the hands of appointed trustees, trustees who are not democratically elected, who are not accountable to the public and whose actions cannot be questioned in court. The transition team will also have similar sweeping powers.

Third, the new government that you propose will have 45 politicians representing the combined interests of 2.3 million people. This is a higher, more distant level of government that will only act to alienate citizens from their elected representatives.

As E.F. Schumacher said, "Small is beautiful." Smaller governments allow greater democratic access to citizens and they allow a more customized approach to the problems that affect each municipality, and each municipality in Toronto is very different from the next. Bill 103 flies in the face of this sensible approach to government. The very health of our communities is threatened with this legislation.

As you have sat here listening to the deputations, speaker after speaker has wondered aloud what your government is really up to with Bill 103. You have given us scant information on the details of the amalgamation and you have plainly stated that you will not respect the people's voice in the upcoming referendums.

Study after study says that amalgamation doesn't work. It doesn't save money and it doesn't strengthen democracy. What then are you really after? Is it a tax grab? Is it a restructuring of power? Is it about privatization? Is it about all the above? I want to appeal to your humanity and ask you to be honest with the people whose lives you are so eager to affect.

Up until the introduction of Bill 103, I believe that most people in Ontario had been caught sleeping as to the true nature of this government. You caught the people of Ontario sleeping because they had been accustomed to successive governments that were servants of the people. They trusted their elected representatives to act in their best interests and to be good democrats.

But you have awakened the citizens of this city in a way that I have never seen them awakened before. Your arrogant and combative attitude has created a vibrant and working citizens' movement that sees you as the enemy of the people. We think of your government as a stain on democracy in Canada and you have polarized this province like few other contemporary governments in Canada have, with the exception perhaps of the Parti Québécois. In the wake of your governance, you are leaving whole sections of society seething with bitterness and resentment. Gone are the days that the government of Ontario tried to find common ground and strove to reason with the opposition.

You have crossed a line, a line of decency and civility that the people of Ontario are beginning to recognize. I believe your government is behaving in an unthinking manner. What I mean by this is that you are governing from an ideological position, not from a position that allows you to be flexible and to seek common ground with those who question your policies.

You are governing by the ideology of the far right. In my opinion, any ideology is a curse to society, whether it comes from the left or whether it comes from the right. I believe this because in my experience there is little room for discussion with an ideologue. Only an unthinking government and, I would put it to you, an uncaring government would attempt such a major change in the way local communities conduct themselves without their consent.

With Bill 103, you are messing with people's sense of identity, their sense of place and home, their sense of how things are usually done, and you are messing with their democratic rights. These issues have very deep emotions connected with them. You cannot come into someone's home and rearrange it without their consent without paying a price, a price that increases exponentially to the number of people who are affected.

If you force this legislation through without the people's consent, don't think for a moment that your problems are over. Democracy, as history amply illustrates, has known many challenges, and if you want to know about a group of people that can and will fight back, it is people who are fighting for their democratic rights.

In short, we will not let you get away with it. It was not the government that gave us democracy; it was the people. I have spoken with many people about this issue and, without exception, all who learn of the process on Bill 103 are opposed to it. I asked one person, "What would you do if Bill 103 actually becomes law?" He said, "We'll take to the streets." I hope I do not see images of Belgrade here on the streets of Toronto.

If you remove the people's right to speak, you will receive the wrath of a non-partisan backlash the likes of which you have not yet seen. And other people will move in to join them, people who have other axes to grind with your government.

You have heard many deputations here, and many presenters have talked first and foremost about the lack of democracy in Bill 103. You, the committee, are like the examining physicians putting your finger to the pulse of the body polity. You would do well politically to listen

to what this body is telling you. In short, we are telling you to back off, leave your ideological position at the door and enter into earnest discussions with the people whose lives you will most certainly affect. Your government is at a critical point and you still have the time to retreat with minimal damage.

If you do not heed the voice of the people, I pray that your government can control the anger you will certainly unleash. Everybody will dig in for a truly nasty fight, the likes of which modern Ontario has never seen. Careers will be ruined and you will be held accountable in the next election.

To you, the individual Tory MPPs, I urge you to break ranks with your government and vote against Bill 103. Ask your masters the same hard questions that we are asking you. Respect the will of the people. Let the referendums dictate to you. We will not accept you dictating to us.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Ross. You've effectively used all your allotted time and I thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this morning.

#### GALE GARNETT

**The Chair:** Gale Garnett, please. Good morning, Ms Garnett. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Gale Garnett:** Good morning to everyone and thank you for hearing my deputation. Before I make the deputation itself, I am in the rather unusual position of owing an apology to Al Leach, something I never thought would happen in my lifetime, but last night I attended a meeting in my riding of north Rosedale where Minister Leach was speaking. When we were able to ask questions and make comments to him, I said it was very difficult to talk to him because the hostility and the hatred he radiated towards what I said last night and "my city" was palpable and it made it hard to relate to him.

I did something last night that I also didn't think I could do. I think I hurt his feelings. I didn't mean to do that. He said that he was 61 years old and had been a resident of Toronto all his life and that he loved his city and resented my remark. Having heard very little honest, open statement from Minister Leach since this thing started, his response was unmistakable by being different from all his other responses.

I believe he probably does love his city and I misread what I was seeing. What I was seeing, and I will hold to that, was a general scorn, a disdain, a snickering in the way he relates to all those who disagree with him. It was not, in fact, Toronto-based, and I do apologize for that and I would appreciate it if someone would let him know that.

#### 1030

I also had hoped that the Premier would be here. I'd hoped that more members of the government would be here. I hope this is not one of those wonderful, therapeutic exercises in venting that means nothing. On the chance that it might mean something, I shall proceed.

The irony of all this mega-madness that this provincial government has put upon us is that they've managed to do something that no individual or group has really been able to do for a very long time, if ever, in my province.

They have united six very different individual municipalities with each other, and with the people of Hamilton-Wentworth, the people of Ottawa-Carleton, the people of Elora, probably other people I haven't even met yet, people of all ages, ethnicities, economic classes and political affiliations. We have learned, more than at any time I can remember, to know more about each other, to support each other, to ask questions of each other. Thousands and thousands of us, united by our opposition to this community-destroying, neutralizing mega-mess, have become much more of a province, a unified province in opposing megacity, in opposing the "megastisizing" of this cancer.

Our six very individual cities have grown up around both the gifts and the needs of their individual populations. It is anti-democratic and unhealthy to have community organizations that do not have real influence: patronizing, paternalistically donated little neighbourhood organizations, again places where you can vent, without elected officials, without power.

The strength of this province as a whole is only as good as the strength of its strong municipalities, municipalities with active, concerned citizens and their democratically elected representatives. Can there be tightenings and greater efficiencies? Can there be efficiencies which also maintain and even expand humanity and compassion? Yes, I believe there can, but only through democratic consultation and community participation, not by Harriscu and Leachescu turning Ontario into a maple-flavoured new-world Romania run by a closed government and its phantom, unelected trustees. Because a law can be found by which to abrogate democracy does not make it morally, ethically or democratically acceptable to Ontarians or to Canadians. What is being attempted here is a War Measures Act in a time of peace. Why is this government at war with our cities and towns?

Through my work, with which some of you I know are familiar, as an actor, a writer and a director, I have travelled a great deal, nationally and internationally. I have gotten to know well many cities and provinces of this country and to know that lots of folks in other cities and provinces dislike Toronto and Torontocentrism.

There have been times when I too have had difficulty loving my city. The words "world class" come to mind. I hated "world class." I hated all that mesquite grilling, fern bar, self-congratulations. Calling yourself world class is like calling yourself beautiful. It's better to leave those sorts of designations to other people. But you can love your city because it works for you, because you've grown there, because you've done your work there, because it is home, and that is what I believe is threatened now.

Fortune magazine, a place not known as a hotbed of left-wing thought, has called Toronto, very recently, the most livable city, but I think the one-two punch of brutal and unaffordable downloading while removing the power of our mayors and councillors to act on our behalf will destroy the already eroding livability of this place — when I say "this place" I mean all six — and the impossible property taxes you plan to impose. When you add that in, you'll drive people out of the centre.

Has anyone ever been in Edmonton at night? Has anyone ever been in Calgary at night? Has anyone been

in New York or Chicago where any 10-year-old can own a gun, where the garbage isn't picked up, where the subways don't work? These seem to be the role models. It's not any place I ever want to live: nice to visit, interesting, colourful. So's Beirut; I don't want to live there either.

What will happen when you drive people out of the centre by letting them know that they will never in their lifetime pay for the houses that will always sit on their heads? You will leave nothing but the poor who can't leave and the rich who can make anything work, because that's what rich does. Rich makes anything possible. Of course, if those people want to stay in a city with a growing class of men, women and children with no elected representatives and local, community-based support services, a population that exponentially expands on to the streets, into the parking lots and over the heating grates, that's highly doubtful.

As for my sector, the arts community, without mutual representation, venues will close and fewer artists will be able to live and work in what has been the core of anglophone Canada's cultural product. There are wonderful artists in Edmonton, in BC, in Newfoundland, in Winnipeg and throughout Canada. I know because I've been lucky enough to work with and for them, but right now, unmegastisized, we have the numbers, and those numbers have generated the Michael Ondaatjes, Margaret Atwoods, Atom Egoyans and hundreds and hundreds of others who generate art for everybody and revenue for Toronto and for the province of Ontario.

In the form of the Canadian Film Centre and the support of people like Garth Drabinsky and Mayor Mel Lastman, North York has had this experience as well. Toronto's mayor, Barbara Hall, has repeatedly demonstrated a passion for and commitment to Toronto's arts and artists, as has the grand and glorious Mirvish family. Megacity and AVA/MVA will combine to radically reduce this productive sector and the critically important tourism it generates.

Finally, I implore Premier Harris, Minister Leach and all members of the government, climb down from this dreadful and deeply hated idea. It will not be seen as a weakness. It will be seen as the strongest and most honourable response to the will of the people for whom you work. The citizens of Toronto, North York, East York, York, Mississauga, Scarborough and Etobicoke, we are your employers. If you do this, the term "honourable" will be more than a name attached to your post. If you do this, you will have the respect of all, even those who may disagree profoundly with this or that policy. If you do this, we will, with the revivified vigour and thoughtfulness that mega-mess has inspired in thousands, find democratic solutions together.

If instead you just barrel on with neo-Romania, you will, I believe, be remembered by history as the government that brought down Canada's largest and most successful province. The choice is yours. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Garnett, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

*Applause.*

Ladies and gentlemen, I have to remind you about applause from the audience. Each time I have to stop and

make an announcement, you're cutting into the time of the people who are going to present the rest of the morning. We're not empowered to sit beyond noon. I'm going to recognize the clock today. If I have to keep making these announcements, you're going to continue to eat into the time of those presenters, so I'd appreciate if you could hold your applause to a minimum, as inspired as you may be by some of the speakers. Thank you.

### CAROLYN RIEMER

**The Chair:** Would Carolyn Riemer come forward. Welcome.

**Mrs Carolyn Riemer:** Good morning. My name is Carolyn Riemer. My family and I have lived in Toronto for 35 years and have always been very much a part of the city as it changed and grew. We very seldom felt that we didn't have the ability to be part of these changes because we felt at ease with the system and knew that we could access it quite readily when we wanted to, and have done so many times.

I am very happy to be here today to speak on the issue of Bill 103. Bill 103 caught my attention at my local residents' association meeting back in late November of last year. It became clear to all of us at the meeting that Bill 103 was something we'd better find out about, and along with my fellow neighbours we organized one of the first public meetings to learn what this bill actually said and how it would affect us.

There was certainly a balance at this meeting. Dennis Fotinos, our Metro rep and pro-amalgamation, was there along with our Conservative MPP, Derwyn Shea, also supporting amalgamation. On the other side were Mayor Barbara Hall and our city councillor, Rob Maxwell. The outcome of that meeting was: (1) We absolutely needed more information and (2) we needed more time to understand what the heck was going on.

**1040**

This public meeting was held in the first week of December and first reading of Bill 103 happened on December 17. How's that for speed? Very impressive but very suspect. Why the big rush? If this megacity was going to be so efficient and cost-saving, then surely there was time to explain to the citizens of all the cities what the advantages were and then, of course, back these advantages up with the appropriate facts and figures. After all, considering the magnitude of the changes this government was proposing, they must have done a lot of research and known what they were talking about. This was all we asked and this is what we expected. We did not get what we asked for.

While writing this submission, an analogy came to mind. We have been renovating our home, which is almost 100 years old, for many years. It has been a slow but rewarding job. We didn't want to rush the changes to our house because they were important to us and we knew that it took time to consult and to gather the pertinent information. Initially, in order to get the adequate information, we sat down and worked closely with friends who are in the renovating and design business and discussed ways of how to disentangle the good points of the design of the house from the bad points.

The good points of our house were a solid, strong foundation and lots of windows, some letting in a great deal of light and others that needed to be moved so that more light could get in. The bad points of the house included some inefficiencies with the furnace and an unwieldy floor plan that we could change to reduce waste and duplication. We planned to do these renovations by ourselves, as it was less expensive and we knew it would be done well because we were competent workers, and of course we would be in continuous consultation with our friends, who had our best interests at heart and would not try to force us to do things that made no sense and hadn't been discussed.

This initial stage was very successful. As the years passed by, and although the foundation of our house was still solid and strong, we felt that there should be some changes and we looked forward to them since changes are a good thing as long as they are well-thought-out and discussed. Our friends who had been our renovators and designers had moved away. We still kept in touch but they hadn't seen our house for a long time and wouldn't understand the changes that we wanted.

A new renovation team had just moved on to the block. We had heard that as part of their renovation policy they were committed to working closely with their clients by sitting down and discussing any major changes they might want to make to our house. After considerable planning and consultation, we were confident that they understood what we wanted, so we decided to go on a holiday. How nice to be able to go away and have somebody else come in and do all that work.

When we got back we could hardly wait to see how wonderful the changes would look. We rushed to the door and when we opened it we could not believe our eyes. They had, against all their expressed promises, completely changed our home beyond recognition. It had been gutted. When we threatened to take this issue to our elected officials at city hall, they said no, that a board of trustees had been appointed and no matter what we said, the decision of the board was final and could not be reviewed or questioned by a court and that it would be useless to wait for this board of trustees to leave because following them was a transition team, which was also appointed by the government, that had the power to impose further restrictions on our elected officials.

"This can't be possible," we said. "This is a democratic country and we will be heard." "Well, you can shout all you want," they said, "but we will not listen. Your house needed these changes so we made them without your consent, no matter that we promised to work closely with you. As well, we will be downloading all these extra renovating costs to you."

We felt overwhelmed and betrayed. We talked to our friends who had moved away. They too were angry and confused. What had happened here? We went back to our unrecognizable house and we looked at each other and said, "This was a house with a good and a strong foundation that needed some changes, but it did not need to be gutted."

Getting back to the issue at hand, you can see that the same thing is happening here. Three commissions have said to keep the city small, do any streamlining that has

to be done under the small city parameters and, above all, work from the outside in. As the Crombie report recommends, "What is needed today is a mechanism to knit municipalities in the regions to the Toronto core in much the same way that the 1953 governance arrangements did with downtown Toronto and the Metro suburbs."

It took several years to make these changes in 1953. This government is trying to bulldoze through legislation: Bill 103, the megacity bill; Bill 104, which completely changes our education system; Bill 105, which gives police chiefs extraordinary powers; and Bill 106, which completely revamps our property tax. And let's not forget the tearing apart of our health care system in just the same way our house was gutted, without our consent. And it is happening in 30 days and 30 nights.

The Tory government's campaign had promised to work closely with municipalities to ensure that any action they took would not result in increases to local property taxes. They also promised to sit down with municipalities and discuss ways of reducing government entanglement and bureaucracy with an eye to eliminating waste and duplication as well as unfair downloading. It is utterly impossible to equate "working closely with," "sitting down with," and "discussing with" to Bill 103.

Bill 103 is the antithesis of the promises made by the Harris government. There have only been edicts from above: "You shall join together. You shall have an unelected board of trustees take over the job of duly elected officials and those trustees shall report back only to me. The decisions of the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court. After the board of trustees will come a transition team that will have the same sweeping powers the trustees had." The word "totalitarian" fits nicely here.

Of the four issues mentioned, the first, being the promise to work closely with, sit down with and discuss with, did not happen; the second point, being the appointment without legislation of a board of trustees, has happened; the third point, concerning the transition team, and the fourth point, concerning the gutting of a house that has a strong and solid foundation, have not yet happened.

This is a deadly serious renovation and the designers of it have not prepared even the most minimal drawings to show that such a gutting would make our house more efficient and less confusing, remove duplication or improve services and waste reduction. Therefore, the renovations should cease until such time as the people responsible for them go back to the drawing-board and come up with a plan that they can actually show us with pride. This will prove that we have been wrong in our belief that this government has no respect for the people in Metropolitan Toronto and indeed all of Ontario.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. You have effectively used all of your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation this morning.

NANCY SMITH LEA

**The Chair:** Would Nancy Smith Lea please come forward. Good morning. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Nancy Smith Lea:** I'm very much opposed to Bill 103, which proposes amalgamation of the six cities in

Metropolitan Toronto. The Harris government is acting so appallingly in so many ways, it's hard to pick just one area in which to speak in the 10 minutes allotted to me.

A partial list of what this government has legislated within a two-month span is staggering: wiping out the city of Toronto, a city formed over 150 years ago; stripping the cities of their reserve funds; appointing trustees to have control over elected officials; forcing citizens to pay for these same trustees as well as the transition team; downloading social service costs; destroying school boards, and so on. This is a daunting list. How to respond?

I could speak to you as an educator working directly with students and researchers at the University of Toronto for the past six years. I could speak to you as a resident of downtown Toronto for the past nine years, how I walk to do my shopping at my local fruit store, the deli, the bakery, and about all the lively restaurants and cafés I enjoy. I could speak to you as a public transit user and about how integral the streetcars and subways are to the vitality of the city. I could speak to you as a board member of the Niagara neighbourhood association. It was a difficult decision but I decided to speak to you today as a cyclist.

Like most suburban kids, I cycled until I got my licence when I was 16 and then did not look back until I moved to downtown Toronto in 1989. I soon realized that Toronto was an ideal place for cycling and a place where I could live without a car with no real hardship. I sold my car and have not owned a car since. I use my bicycle, the TTC and walking as my primary means of transportation.

#### 1050

Many citizens do not know or care that there are two levels of government in Toronto right now. However, cyclists soon figure this out. Cyclists are much more likely to be killed on Metro roads. Cars drive faster and there are more of them. Only one Metro road in this city has a bike lane on it. By contrast, the roads under the control of the city of Toronto are generally much safer and more pleasant for cyclists and pedestrians. Many streets have bike lanes and sidewalks are wider. When a Metro councillor from Toronto tries to get improvements made to Metro roads for cyclists, their motion is voted down by the majority of council, who are from the suburbs and whose only concern is to get in and out of the city quickly by car.

In my experience as a cycling advocate striving to improve conditions for cyclists in the city of Toronto, I've had first-hand experience with both the Metro and city levels of government. The Metro level of government has proved itself to be inflexible and unresponsive to the needs of Torontonians. By contrast, the city of Toronto level of government has so excelled in its progressive policies and democratic style that it is seen as a role model by other North American cities.

To eliminate the city of Toronto local government and the Metro level of government and replace them with something even bigger, even more inflexible and even more unresponsive than the current Metro government is counterproductive and ultimately harmful for all citizens.

The recent reconstructions of Spadina Avenue and St George Street illustrate the different approaches taken by

Metro Toronto and the city of Toronto towards conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. Even though Spadina Avenue, a Metro road, runs through the heart of the city, pedestrian and cycling space was a lower priority than providing for automobiles. By contrast, St George Street, a city street, was designed first for pedestrians and cyclists and lastly for automobiles. The more remote the government is from the community it is affecting, the less appropriate the solution will be.

I was involved with a citizens' group, the Spirit of Spadina Coalition, which lobbied for bike lanes and pedestrian enhancements to the redesign of Spadina. Even though this group had strong support from the community and many of the members were also involved in the Stop the Spadina Expressway campaign during the 1970s, our efforts were not successful. The politicians on the Metro transportation committee and the bureaucrats in the Metro transportation department refused to acknowledge or even attempt to understand the needs of the local community.

Even though thousands of pedestrians throng the sidewalks daily, Metro cut back the sidewalks. Even though Spadina carries many local cyclists and is an extremely wide street, Metro refused to include bike lanes in its design. This important street, a tourist attraction and local meeting place, is seen by the Metro government as a commuter speedway, destination the Gardiner Expressway.

An interchange such as the following was typical in our meetings with Metro planners:

Question, concerned cyclist: "Since you have determined that there is insufficient space for a bicycle lane on Spadina but have added a right-turn lane, what is your recommendation for the safest way to bicycle through this intersection?"

Answer, Metro planner: "Metro does not differentiate between modes of transport."

In other words, this planner did not know the effect his planning decisions would have on bicycle traffic and did not intend to find out.

I am one of the co-founders of a cyclist advocacy group called ARC, Advocacy for Respect for Cyclists. One of the functions ARC serves is to hold memorials for cyclists killed on the streets in Toronto. Most of these vigils are held on Metro roads, roads on which planners do not differentiate between modes of transport.

Toronto is built on a human scale, both physically and politically, a city that is easily accessible by bicycle and promotes bicycle use, which in turn improves Toronto's environment, economy and quality of life. We need to look no further than the bicycle itself to know that smaller systems mean more efficient and responsive systems.

The downtown core was built before automobiles. Public transit is an extremely important function of everyday life, as are bicycles and walking. According to the 1991 Transportation Tomorrow Survey, 51% of households in downtown Toronto have no car. In Scarborough, this number drops to 4% of households that do not have a car. Similar profiles exist of the other cities which this government is proposing to amalgamate with Toronto. In Toronto it is possible and often desirable to either not own a car or leave the car at home when getting around

the city. The dense-built form and the lively neighbourhoods make it attractive to walk or cycle around the city. On a high-smog day in the summer, when many suburbanites are driving their cars in the downtown core, I can only shudder to imagine what it might be like if those 51% of households downtown were also driving around.

Although this is a profound difference between the cities which are proposed to be one, it is only one of many such differences. How can this government in good faith assure us that the differences between these communities will be addressed properly? It is next to impossible to have a faith in a government which appoints a used car salesman as transportation minister, an ineffective director of the TTC as municipal affairs minister and a high school dropout as education minister.

To my knowledge, a successful model does not exist of a megacity that is more economical than smaller governments. Certainly an example does not exist of a megacity which provides a sustainable, healthy, thriving environment for its residents. Yet this government believes it can beat the odds. Unfortunately we, the taxpayers, are given no choice regarding this huge gamble being taken with our money.

Last year two disparate magazines nominated the city of Toronto as number one. Bicycling magazine rated it as the best city for bicycling in North America, and Fortune magazine rated it as the world's best place to live and work respectively. That Toronto can excel, not just as a good place to work, but also as a good place to live and get around in a healthy, non-polluting fashion, is an accomplishment of the highest order. Planners visit Toronto from all over North America to see how we do it. That this government wants to ruin what Torontonians have worked so hard to achieve makes me very angry.

With the ramming through of Bill 103 despite widespread criticism and alarm, this government treats the citizens it was elected to serve with contempt. This government seems to have very little respect for the democratic process and the people who have striven so hard to work within the boundaries of democracy. Democracy is messy, slow, frustrating, but it works. Toronto has not thrived because a bunch of so-called planning experts dictated what should happen. It is the result of citizens being given the chance to say what they need and a government which has responded to these needs.

Toronto has always been a relatively peaceful place, a place many immigrants see as a refuge from dictatorial governments elsewhere in the world. I'm afraid of what this government will do to the peace that we enjoy in Toronto. If Bill 103 is passed, it will destroy the city of Toronto, the only place in Canada I want to live. There may be problems in Toronto, but this is not the way to fix them.

**Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York):** Thank you for the presentation you provided for us. At the beginning of your presentation, you talked about the difficulties you've encountered in dealing with Metro and the insensitivity to the local issues you addressed. I just wondered, are you happy with the status quo?

**Ms Smith Lea:** I would say no. However, what we've always kind of hoped is that the Metro level of govern-

ment would be looked at to be — I don't know what needs to be done with the Metro level of government, but that is the level of government which needs to be changed, not the local government.

**Mrs Munro:** If the people who represented you had the focus both of their own local area, that is, councillors who have a responsibility in groups of six or seven, is that not the kind of thing you're suggesting is necessary: that they can look, if you like, both ways in terms of the needs of their constituents and the city as a whole?

**Ms Smith Lea:** The problem is the distribution of power and that Metro has so much power in the suburbs and yet they can have power over how we live our lives downtown. That seems to be the problem. I don't think I'm answering your question, but I guess I don't really understand what you're talking about. I don't know about this six or seven —

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Mrs Munro, we've come to the end of the time. Thank you, Ms Smith Lea, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1100

#### JOHN RINGER

**The Chair:** Would John Ringer please come forward. Good morning, Mr Ringer, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr John Ringer:** To our charming host and time-keeper and to the other members of the governing party, I bring a message: You are the powers and authorities responsible for Bill 103. Like all other powers and authorities, you will become dust, you will be blown away, you'll be brought down.

I'm called to speak on a holy day. This is the start of the Lenten vigil for Christians, 40 days of reflection and consideration of their motives and aspirations in this world. As a guide to the consideration of Bill 103 in this context, I look for meaning, values, ethics and spirituality. I'm not going to have a chance to cover all of those, and I may not even finish what I'm starting to do, but I want to start with the meaning.

This bill was a complete shock and surprise to me, particularly in the manner in which it was brought forward, in complete disregard of the recommendations of the Who Does What panel on local governance in its letter of December 6. The content of this bill is no more reassuring. I can refer the government members to section 2 of the bill, which simply says that all the bylaws and resolutions of the existing municipalities will continue on a geographic basis. On one level, that suggests no change is going to take place. On another level, the act appoints a transition team to oversee the movement to an amalgamated city and dealing with the perhaps hundreds of thousands of bylaws and resolutions they will be responsible for administering.

As Mr Gilchrist said in response to Barbara Czarnecki on February 5, "What the transition team will do as it works through the balance of the next 11 months...will be to simply cobble together the most senior levels, the recommended appointments that would take effect on January 1; for example, that of the fire chief." I find the government's statement of what this bill means and the

powers to cobble together as being the reflection of the meaning of this legislation for this government.

This legislation was bad from the start. The procedure by which it was brought in was bad, and the fruits of bad legislation and bad actions are more bad things. It was clear from the moment this legislation was introduced that there would be more bad things coming, and this was revealed quite quickly in the downloading.

Inextricably intertwined with the attitude of this government towards its responsibilities to the citizens of this province, downloading is the fruit of Bill 103. Mr Gilchrist also made a statement to Mr Graham Smith on February 5, that Mr David Crombie and the Metro board of trade are "100% on side on amalgamation." With respect, this is not true.

I have spoken personally with Mr Crombie. His feeling is that perhaps there's not a big difference between one and four, that perhaps it's not tremendously relevant. In his conversations with me, he did not choose amalgamation as the preferred vehicle for bringing forward change in the municipal government. The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto has some very considered policies. Their position on amalgamation is largely historic. They have supported amalgamation for some time. Reference is made from time to time to 1969, when Mr Dennison was mayor of Toronto and supported amalgamation. We've come a long way since then and so has the board of trade. They'll be here tomorrow. You can ask them whether they're 100% on side with amalgamation. I do not believe they are. Both Mr Crombie and the board of trade are 100% opposed to the downloading legislation and have made that statement public.

I want to talk a little about values. You've heard many people come forward before this committee and talk about things that concern them. Municipal government is clearly not just about money and finances. The concerns that people have expressed — such as the speaker who preceded me, about her lifestyle — are not simply issues of economics. These are issues that are dealt with on a local democratic level. But looking at the issue of economics, nobody is telling me that there are going to be savings guaranteed out of this legislation.

I attended on my local member of Parliament, the honourable Minister of Economic Development. He was candid enough to tell me that there was no guarantee that this would result in any savings whatsoever. As our esteemed vice-chair was involved in a very important movement, Environment not Economics, there are issues that transcend the economic matters here.

I'm not sure how much time I have left, but I want to proceed. As I say, it was clear from the introduction of this legislation that bad things would follow. Looking at the context of the Crombie report and this legislation, it was in terms of making changes to the greater Toronto region. That was inextricably intertwined in the recommendation. It was said that the priority was the GTA and that the consolidations had to be looked at in that context. We now have a commissioner appointed to report and he will be putting out later this week a position paper that will be public, based on his consultations to date with the municipalities involved.

Based on the brief discussion I was able to have with Mr Farrow, I came away tremendously concerned. I

believe the meaning of all this legislation is now clear: We will have one city of Toronto and 29 municipalities surrounding it which will be responsible for a Greater Toronto Services Board. It seems to me to be a clear recipe for the regions around Toronto dominating the issues on the Greater Toronto Services Board, 29 to 1.

I'm sure Mr Farrow will struggle diligently to bring forward recommendations in his report, which is to be submitted to the minister by mid-March. I also believe that report will be completely ignored by this government in the same fashion that it ignored the recommendations of the Who Does What panel. The recipe will be for a greater Toronto region dominated by the regions and not even dominated by the people in those regions.

You might wonder why Mrs McCallion has spoken out against amalgamation. I think she foresees that this greater Toronto region as instituted by this government will be a region beholden to the vacant land to be developed for the benefit of the developers and not for people, that the issues that will come out of this will devastate not just the city of Toronto but the city of Scarborough, squeezed between the powers of Markham and Durham and struggling with an aging infrastructure and loss of employment, which will be drained off to the surrounding region, leaving not the hole in the doughnut but a dead doughnut.

**The Chair:** Mr Ringer, you're coming to the end of your time. I'd appreciate it if you would wrap up.

**Mr Ringer:** That is what I see as the meaning of this legislation. I think the values shown in the way that people opposing it have been denigrated as self-interested cranks are despicable. I think that reasoning from the amalgamation of Leaside, a town of 25,000 people which I grew up in, to the amalgamation of 2.3 million is fatuous. I won't have time to talk about ethics or spirituality. I'll have to stop here.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Ringer, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

1110

### BOBBI SPECK

**The Chair:** Would Bobbi Speck please come forward. Good morning, Ms Speck, and welcome to the committee.

**Bobbi Speck:** I'll be reading an abridged version of what you have in print.

A Mega-Tragedy:

The background: The triumvirate — Harris, Leach, Johnson, together with Gilchrist — has executed the body politic, municipal government, and replaced it with a corporate dictatorship.

The speaker, an ordinary citizen.

Representatives, Torontonians, citizens: We live in troubled and confusing times. We have witnessed a brutal assault upon our body politic, indeed a devastating act. Who authored this rash and ill-conceived act upon that vital entity? Why, those who hold our public trust: our esteemed elected provincial representatives. Hence do the populace feel confused, betrayed and disenfranchised.

Yet they are not without conscience, these perpetrators of this unnatural act, for they are honourable ministers

and have allowed us, the citizens, permission to vent our grief and sound our eulogies here in their chambers. Well, some of us, and having been cautioned to brevity.

Now well we know that Metro, our oversystem of municipal government, was not perfect. That is why in the last municipal election the populace voted resoundingly to reform the Metro system. But never did we criticize or cry out for reform of our local municipal governments, our six city-states, whose balanced budgets reflect orderly governance and whose responsiveness to the citizenry enhances our sense of pride and place. This is the true body politic: They are accessible and accountable. They serve our communities well.

Yet now are we told we must deny our very senses, that the body politic, these same local governments, have outlived their usefulness and their time. They have placed themselves in the way of the greater good. This strange news is heralded by our trusted provincial government representatives whose very title of office tells us they are all honourable men.

Hard on the heels of this announcement have we witnessed their deadly assault on our communities by inflicting Bill 103, a most devastating weapon with fearsome and many sharp and pointed sections that bring our body politic to its death before our confused and disbelieving eyes. Look ye and behold the bloodied remains of our cities once favoured by fortune.

Were we in error to laud our cities for their balanced budgets? Responsible fiscal control does not seem to be a fault, yet see here where section 9 has rent a great gaping wound, spilling the guts, for by this the municipal coffers have been seized and a board of trustees has been entrenched, a bureaucratic mini-triumvirate with retroactive powers to control these budgetary and other management matters.

Furthermore these trustees — note their carefully chosen title — are not subject to the common citizenry; they are appointed, not elected. So are they also even beyond the courts. Finally, they have unlimited scope because they must perform any duties assigned by the minister.

Hence these trustees appear strangely to float, unapproachable, beyond our reach, in an ethereal atmosphere, like queer, disembodied and intangible spirits. And if some mortal voices cry, "Fie, this is not democratic," we are directed to quell our puny objections and submit to the will of our government, for are they not our honourable ministers?

Now shall we gaze upon the destruction rent by section 16, which caused a blow to the very heart and life's blood of our body politic.

May you yourselves gauge the force of this act if you hear the very potent and dissembling words with which it was wielded. It decrees the appointment of a transition team entrusted with the mandate to "establish the new city's basic organizational structure" — feel the power — and to "carry out any other prescribed duties" — behold the mystery. Thus by indirection is direction known.

Following hard on section 16 was another blow that penetrated the lungs of our beloved body politic. Behold here where section 18 declared: "The decisions of the transition team are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court."

Yes, the citizens weep, but lest in their horror and disbelief they may cry foul and offend our honourable ministers, let me not incite them by quoting further but simply to summarize the import of sections 16 and 18. Thus will we have in the transition team a non-elected body with unlimited powers to spend municipal revenues, to "hire staff" and "obtain expert services," to design our new system of municipal government, and who are not subject to the people nor to the courts, but who are financed by public municipal revenues. So do they have the power to dissolve and to privatize, to tender bids, sign contracts.

They may function without limitations except as imposed by the minister whose bidding they must do — not the people's bidding.

But we are told that our objections to this are unreasonable because it has been decreed by our wise and honourable ministers who assure us they know what is best for us.

See now where sections 24 through 26 struck a fatal blow to the very brain of the body politic, for these delineate the powers of these very same wise and honourable men in whose hands we have placed our public welfare.

These sections, in their essence, grant the minister absolute power. Thus is established a corporate dictatorship, under the leadership of these very honourable ministers who protest they are acting for the public good, notwithstanding the fact that a majority of eligible voters did not cast ballots for their leadership in the last election. Indeed, some wonder, is it because they do not really represent the majority of voters that they need now to appoint themselves absolute power?

Now look you in horror and disbelief, for the final stabbing blow to the body politic was in the back. See where they thrust deep into the spine the downloading of services. Oh, what a vile, unnatural act. How mothers and fathers cry out when they foresee the strangling at first breath of the infant megacity which the province itself has fathered. It has been augured that thus is the province enabled to apply municipal revenues towards its own paternal deficit, while hamstringing the toddling megacity before it even attempts to stand and hobble its first pathetic steps.

Finally, there has been much noise abroad from malcontents among the plebiscite, complaints that the process by which Bill 103 has been presented is undemocratic, and which I have not time to elucidate today, but it is written.

Now it is well known that some us have made great efforts to speak to the triumvirate: Harris, Leach and Johnson, and even to Gilchrist, but they are removed from us. Like the gods, they dwell on high, they are our lofty honourable leaders.

We, as ordinary citizens, could neither protect nor defend our body politic, which has served us well and democratically. We stand here helpless to redress this violation amid tongue-wagging, destructive rumours and suspicions as to the motivations of these honourable ministers who appear to have betrayed the public trust.

We struggle to comprehend them. Can it be ignorance? Stupidity? Greed? A misguided use of corporate tactics, wantonly inflicted on a vital, living organism?

I care not to dwell on or surmise their private griefs. Some others would say that there are secret ambitions that would lead them to fly in the face of democratic principles; that would indeed have them fly from their constituents. But I say, they are our public leaders. Are they not acting out of disinterest?

Yet, see how the citizens are fearful. They buzz among themselves. They ask: Will the new megacity imitate the provincial one that spawned it? Will the accessibility and accountability that brought us such bounty be replaced by touch-tone recordings, canned music and a gigantic, unwieldy army of bureaucrats? Will the clone also be cloaked in party politics?

Let us hope that these elected ministers in whom we have placed our trust gain wisdom in this 11th hour. Let them lend their ears to the public and mitigate the effects of this rash and brutal act upon the body politic. Let them quell the fires in our hearts that are igniting the populace to revolt, rather than arrogantly regard the citizenry as the revolting populace.

**The Chair:** I'm going to have to ask you to wind down, please.

**Bobbi Speck:** Common sense tells us that it is a truly wise and honourable man who can step back and say, "See, here have I erred and now will I redress the harm." May our honourable ministers seek the detachment, strength and wisdom to truly earn these titles.

Mark me well: Were there a tongue for every wound these men have enacted on the body politic, they would not hear themselves think. And I would tremble, if I were they, should the corpse of the bloodied body politic rise up in its putrid mass to haunt these chambers and enact its revenge.

We know that to ignore history is to invite the repetition of history's mistakes, and so our appeal: Let history, and nature, not be confounded.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making a presentation today.

1120

#### LINDAN TOOLE

**The Chair:** Would Lindan Toole please come forward. Good morning, Ms Toole. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Lindan Toole:** I come here today as a private citizen. I do not have notes to distribute, because I only wrote this 40 minutes ago. I don't think you'll be able to read my notes.

I've lived in Toronto for 32 years. I came here from a small Ontario town and I have seen this city transform itself from a bastion of white conservativeness to a multicultural metropolis that thrives at a human level and at a commercial level. While I share a previous presenter's views of the term "world-class," we all recognize that Toronto is a very important world city. It's an important city that is the envy of the world.

I work in tourism. I work with the ministers of tourism and the directors of tourism from 50 or 60 countries in the world and I work extensively throughout North America, South America and the Caribbean. The world marvels at how well this city works. It works because local politicians over the years, people like David Crombie and John Sewell and many other local politi-

cians, had a vision of this city that they worked hard to achieve. That vision had to do with bringing the political process to neighbourhoods, making residents of this city understand that they had input, some control over how local governments did things. It worked pretty well.

It's not perfect and there are many improvements that we can make, but this bill isn't going to make those improvements. This bill will only isolate people from local government. It will make government unresponsive to their concerns. In a quest for this megacity, what we're going to end up with are no benefits to anyone. We're going to end up with Manhattan, and along with Manhattan comes Bedford-Stuyvesant and the south Bronx. I happen to live in the south Bronx of Toronto. I have neighbours from around the world. Within 10 houses of me I have neighbours from Chile, Israel, Italy, Portugal, Jamaica and St Kitts. We are all neighbours.

I see this megacity as isolating, marginalizing many people. I don't want to live in a city where I'm afraid to walk in certain neighbourhoods. I work in those American cities. I don't want this to become a city like New York or Los Angeles or Miami.

It's different from those cities because of all of the years of work and the goal of thoughtful inclusionary democracy that politicians like John Sewell and David Crombie and Ron Kanter, whom I worked for, for many years, and Mike Colle and Joe Pantalone have all recognized and worked towards. If this government has a vision similar to the vision of these people, it's a vision only of a megacity where power is absolute and shared by a very small group of rich white guys, and that's not the city I choose to live in.

This is a wonderful city that's recognized by people around the world as bringing everyone together and giving everyone a voice. Bill 103 and Bill 104, which is very closely intertwined, will serve to destroy everything we've worked for many years to achieve. I think while there certainly have to be changes made, and I recognize that and I am not opposed to the concept of a megacity, we cannot push this through in a few short months and think we are going to cover the bases and make this a better place. We are not.

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** Thank you, Ms Toole. I guess the difficulty we're having in this bill is trying to make the government understand that neighbourhoods that work and small business communities that work don't happen by accident. They don't seem to appreciate that when local councils and councillors pay attention to the little things, neighbourhoods work. They seem to think these have happened almost spontaneously.

They don't recognize the blood, sweat and tears that have gone into making this place work. The line they keep on giving us is: "Well, Swansea's always been there. Swansea's always going to be there." They just have no appreciation of the amount of work the city of Toronto put into making sure Swansea worked. They think automatically this is going to take place because they're going to have these token neighbourhood councils or neighbourhood groups, whatever they're called.

Could you comment on what it takes, in terms of a real sense, to make areas that in many ways have been going through some tough times become successful as they are?

**Ms Toole:** I can comment from my years working for then-Alderman Kanter. We worked from 9 o'clock in the morning until 9 o'clock at night many times, meeting with neighbourhood groups, listening to and acting on their concerns. People must feel that they have some input, that they have some control over the process, and they can only feel that if they have access to local politicians. It does take many hours and many meetings and listening to many hundreds of people a week who have very small individual concerns, neighbourhood community concerns that they want to have addressed. They want to present their local councillors with their views and then have their councillors represent them to city government.

The megacity will not allow people to have access to their councillors. The areas will be too large. There will be too many people to serve. Neighbourhoods will be grouped together and an individual thought won't be given much consideration because people won't have time to give individuals or small groups their time, and with this band of trustees it's not clear they'll even have the ability to be responsive to local needs.

**Mr Colle:** You worked with Ron Kanter. I think he sat on Metro for a while.

**Ms Toole:** He did, yes.

**Mr Colle:** This is another thing this government doesn't understand, that this new mega-councillor will also have to sit maybe on the TTC or the police services board, Metro licensing, the new hydro mega-conglomerate. On top of that, he or she may have to sit on the new GTA coordinating body for economic development. So how is a councillor ever going to be face to face with a little neighbourhood group that's concerned about the crack house down the street or the problem in the park?

**Ms Toole:** Or have the time to be knowledgeable about all of the issues that they have to deal with in all of the committees they have to sit on?

**Mr Colle:** Yes. I guess the thing that might help them is to maybe list all the functions that would be necessary to make this thing work, but they think that somehow, by magic, they're going to be able to sit on all these committees and at the same time deal with the little things that make neighbourhoods work.

Thank you very much for coming. I appreciate it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Toole, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1130

#### KATHLEEN WYNNE

**The Chair:** Would Kathleen Wynne please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Kathleen Wynne:** Good morning. My name is Kathleen Wynne and I come to speak to you today wearing a number of different hats. I am a resident of the city of Toronto and I live in the neighbourhood of north Toronto, but I grew up in Richmond Hill before it was 905, when it was still a small town.

I am the mother of three children who are currently enrolled in the public school system. I am a mediator. I sit on the steering committee of the Citizens for Local Democracy and chair a group of public school parents

called the Metro Parent Network. But first and foremost, I am a citizen of Ontario who has always believed that my democratic rights are sacrosanct.

For the past nine weeks I have chaired the Monday night meetings of the Citizens for Local Democracy and it's been a remarkable experience for me as I've watched the groundswell of resistance to Bill 103 build. For the past three weeks we've had at least 1,500 people from East York, York, Toronto, Scarborough, North York and Etobicoke coming together to give each other support and to build a movement. I believe this movement is rooted in two reactions to this piece of legislation.

First of all, it is rooted in an outrage at the crippling of the democratic process that is inherent in Bill 103 with its appointment of provincial trustees and its removal of accessible local representation. Secondly, the movement is rooted in a deep fear of change that seems to be haphazard, ill-considered and far too fast. With each new announcement it seems clear that this is not a plan that has been well researched and documented. Most recently, it appears that the mandate of our current municipal politicians must be extended. The haste with which this government is moving makes us afraid that good plans are not in place. This morning's report of confusion about the exact amount that might be downloaded to municipalities seems to confirm this fear that many of us have.

I've tried for the past month to understand the motivation of the government as it continues to move ahead in the face of astounding opposition from its own and from others, and here is my humble analysis, for what it's worth:

I believe that there is someone in this government, and it may be Mr Harris or someone who advises him, who genuinely believed and perhaps still does that a tax cut would jump-start the economy. The government was then committed to the tax cut that it had promised. The megacity legislation, the Fewer School Boards Act — Bill 104 — and the downloading plan were introduced perhaps to facilitate the removal of political clout and money from urban Toronto.

Perhaps then the Tory politicians were advised that if all of this action at the provincial level were to take place late in the year, there would be very little, if any, reaction from people because everyone hibernates in Canada in the winter and we're pretty polite anyway and only the lefties would storm the barricade and who cares about them anyway? Maybe they were also told that the folks who would suffer the most would be women, children and the poor, and since this government was not elected by any of those groups, it didn't need to worry about the polls.

Then something went terribly wrong in the government's plan. People put aside their plans over the holiday season and started going to meetings. Folks from Rosedale and High Park and Etobicoke and North York started gathering in living rooms and joining together. They pushed their local politicians, who were sometimes reluctant to appear to be self-serving, to take leadership. They decided to hold referenda, even though they were told that no one would listen.

Simultaneously, the government started to get more defensive. In conflict resolution terms — I train kids in

schools to be peer mediators, so excuse the analysis — the positions became entrenched. More doors were locked, more government meetings, and MPPs became inaccessible. Those of us on the outside had our suspicions confirmed that the government was trying to harm us.

So here we are today. The chorus of voices asks for more time and a more humane, democratic process that would include local politicians who have been elected to represent our interests.

On the inside, and I speak here to the government members, I can only imagine that the stakes have gotten higher. It must have become harder to back down, harder to admit that a mistake has been made. I know that it has been said before at these hearings, but it bears repetition: The courageous act now would be to defeat this legislation. The historic and noble decision would be to turn the process of municipal change over to those directly involved. It would mean a slower and more evolutionary change. It would mean producing real impact studies and creating new proposals for municipal change.

None of us knows what the outcome would be specifically, because it would mean replacing a so-called plan with a process, which is always scary. I believe, however, that this government could choose to outline parameters within which regional and local politicians could create a process that would ensure that democracy was respected and municipal governance was improved.

This government has made much of creating an Ontario that is financially healthy for our children and grandchildren. As the mother of three children, I ask you to preserve the tradition of democratic process in this province, that you allow our elected representatives to do their jobs. I ask that you not persevere with this piece of legislation that will create chaos in our community and that will probably not save any of us a dollar in the long, and even the short, run and will probably cost us many.

I suspect that many of the government members here are feeling the strain of operating in this hostile environment day after day. I cannot imagine that it makes for a peaceful existence to have your actions reviled by thousands of citizens, many of whom elected you in the first place. I ask that you pay attention to that discomfort as you finish these hearings. The energy and exuberance that you will hear on Saturday as people take to Yonge Street will be heard around the province. It would be best if you would join us.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** I want to thank you, and so many who have come today and in previous days, for taking the time to share your feelings about why it is important to save local government. We have seen wonderful deputations, brilliant deputations, by a whole number of people who have a great deal of expertise. We've had lawyers, architects, professors, consultants, small business people, a lot of people with titles, and one would assume that they have a great deal of knowledge. At least from what I read and from the presentations, they're very well researched.

They are saying that from the point of view of economics it doesn't work, because they've read the research, and from the point of view of values, which a number of people have commented on, it doesn't work either. Could so many of you be so intellectually bankrupt that only Mr

Leach and Mr Harris have the knowledge and the omnipotence to be able to tell us what's good for us? Is that what it's about?

**Ms Wynne:** I'm going to go back to my school yard analogy. That's why I think that what's going on here is that two positions have been taken, and even when rational arguments are being presented, it's very hard for them to be heard because the position is so solid on the other side. If we make an analogy with the school yard bully — and I work with kids who are in these situations — it's really hard to back down. When you've said, "This is what we're going to do," it doesn't matter how much sanity and rationality comes at you. It's very difficult to say, "You're right, we made a mistake." That's why, in my presentation, it takes great bravery and great courage to, in the face of rational argument, say: "You're right, we made a mistake. We listened to people we shouldn't have listened to and we're going to change our mind."

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Leach has made the point that he's going to make some changes. I think he needs, to save face, to appear to make some changes. I believe this bill to be fundamentally flawed. Do you believe that somehow we can correct this or that and make it better?

**Ms Wynne:** I think at the core of this bill there's a fundamental problem, and that is that it puts in place an undemocratic process. It was introduced in an undemocratic way and it's got at its core an undemocratic process. Whatever small changes are made, that core piece needs to be changed so that we have people who we elected making these decisions. So if Metro councillors and local city councillors can sit down at a table and are given the mandate to change the way this city is governed, then we can believe that a good answer will be reached. But when politically appointed provincial trustees have the power to make those decisions, we are not going to trust the outcome.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Wynne, for coming forward this morning.

1140

#### JOHAN HELLEBUST

**The Chair:** Would Johan Hellebust please come forward. Good morning, Mr Hellebust. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Johan Hellebust:** Thank you, Mr Chair and members of this committee. My name is Johan Hellebust. I work at the University of Toronto and live in East York, the same East York that the House leader for the Tory government, Mr David Johnson, referred to as the Garden of Eden when he became mayor of the same idyllic municipality not very long ago. In an inaugural address to the East York council in 1985, he stated, "The survival of this municipality has been questioned for years, perhaps decades — but survive it has and survive it will."

Clearly, the honourable minister must have had second thoughts about this community, as well as all of the other thriving municipalities that make up Metro Toronto. He now appears quite happy to throw his considerable intelligence, talents and personal charm behind an ill-thought-out experiment in social engineering of staggering proportions that, to me, is threatening the democratic process and quality of life in Toronto.

Why do I feel so strongly about Bill 103? First of all, the process itself is scary. To the best of my knowledge, there was no advance warning from the Tories during their election campaign that destruction of local municipal governments and the creation of a megacity was on their agenda. When it was presented last December, it was as a bombshell. Their motive? Greater efficiency and saving taxpayers money. Extensive studies to back it up? None.

The plan certainly is contrary to the Golden task force report. It is also contrary to the recommendations of the Crombie Who Does What advisory panel. In essence, Crombie's panel stated that amalgamation by itself, without attention to coordinated governance of the entire greater Toronto area, would be a huge mistake.

Wondering whether I was really missing something important, I attended meetings to find out what others thought about this bill. Peter Russell, an outstanding political scientist and expert on constitutional law, stated at a meeting at Ryerson university, "Metro Toronto has a legacy of strong municipal government, a tradition the provincial government is undermining." He also stated that the megacity plan is a bad piece of legislation. Ursula Franklin, another professor and a social thinker I greatly respect, stated that the megacity plan is destructive to the habitat of Toronto, to its quality of life.

I could go on and on about what numerous other very highly qualified and respected people have said, people who have thought long and deeply about what makes democracy work and what is important to the quality of life in large urban areas, but obviously I do not have time; others have made the same points over and over again. But the general message is that the existence of municipal governments of manageable size is essential to the democratic process.

With respect to what others think of Bill 103, I would just like to add that I was very pleased to see an open letter to Premier Harris signed by members of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies at the University of Toronto, asking the government to reconsider its plan to download the cost of welfare and social services on to municipal property taxes. It takes real courage for members of a research centre which depends to a large extent on funding from government agencies to publicly state that they think what the provincial government is doing is wrong, however diplomatically stated.

I am worried about the pride government members seem to take in their courage to bulldoze through with this megacity legislation in the face of strong and growing opposition. Since the government has not come up with concrete and convincing evidence for positive outcomes of such an amalgamation of already large municipalities, even regarding the potential savings of taxpayers' money, I can only conclude that such evidence does not exist.

I would hate to see us revert to the conditions of the disastrous 1930s when municipal governments alone had the responsibilities for welfare and social services, and the provincial and federal governments, whether Liberal or Tory, were more than happy to maintain it that way. This excused them from taking any significant action to

relieve the suffering of large segments of the population over a whole decade.

There are a couple of other relevant and spectacular reversals of positions by politicians in addition to that of Mr David Johnson, which I referred to, that I want to briefly touch upon. The Metro task force summary produced by the committee headed by a former mayor of Scarborough and a Progressive Conservative, Ms Joyce Trimmer, to enlighten Mr Harris as he headed into a provincial election included the following statement: "The strongest signal received during our consultations was that local government was the one closest to the people and it must remain so."

It appeared that Mr Harris liked what was contained in the Trimmer report and he said at one meeting that he favoured the elimination of Metro and preferred the level of government closest to the people. Clearly he must have reversed his stand without warning to the people of Ontario.

Another spectacular case of reversal of political conviction by a Tory at the federal level is that of Mr Mulroney, who stated the following at a meeting in Thunder Bay: "Free trade negotiations with the Americans? It's like sleeping with an elephant. It's terrific until the elephant twitches, and if the elephant rolls over, you're a dead man." Fifteen months later, he initiated free trade negotiations with the US. We all know the outcome of free trade: terrific for some — the competitive and opportunistic — and dreadful for large segments of the population, particularly the young, because of long-term unemployment, badly paid short-term jobs and uncertainties for many people even in highly paid jobs.

I refer to the free trade issue, the power of the marketplace and the accompanying loss of ability of governments to protect their constituents from free flow of money and therefore jobs across borders because I think it is relevant. It seems that the Ontario government has concluded that since democratic governments have lost so much control over economies and employment in the country and provinces anyway, perhaps one should go one step further and just remove governments, particularly at the lowest, municipal levels. Ironically, this is the level of government that seems to work best. Instead, it plans to introduce a megacity government, far removed from its constituents but readily accessible to business and to the control of free market interests.

The only clear mandate that I see the Tory government has for restructuring of governments in Ontario is the creation of an effective governing structure for the greater Toronto region. Excellent justification for this comes out of the Golden and the Crombie panel reports. Please scrap the megacity plan and proceed with the creation of a Greater Toronto Services Board, as recommended. The creation of a megacity — an unattractive elephant monster — before proceeding with the Greater Toronto Services Board will make a very threatening bedfellow for the other, much smaller municipalities in the region.

I must admit, however, that I'm greatly concerned with the damaging changes already introduced by this government that weaken environmental protection, remove greenbelt regions and relax regulations designed to minimize urban sprawl. This severely handicaps effective

action on some of the key mandates for a Greater Toronto Services Board as laid down by the Crombie panel.

There have been some good Tory governments in this province in the past, but this is not one of them. Quite frankly, I'm tempted to suggest to this government that it resign and that the Tories try to win re-election on a campaign where they clearly state that their main platform is to provide tax reductions and that they interpret a win, even if based on a minority of electoral votes, to empower them to do anything to achieve this objective, with little regard to democratic process, much as the Tory government is doing now. Those of us who like to gamble may go for it; the rest of us who do not believe in dictatorial governments will not.

The Honourable Mr Leach stated at the opening of these hearings, "We have a one-time opportunity ahead of us to take advantage of the best ideas in government and planning." I say that we already have one of the best cities in the world and that this is to a large extent because of good, effective municipal governments that we enjoy, respect and do not want to lose. Mr Leach sounds like a fly-by-night penny stock salesman: "This is your opportunity of a lifetime." I refuse his offer with disdain. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Hellebust. You've exhausted your time. We appreciate you coming before the committee today.

#### DON YOUNG

**The Chair:** Would Don Young please come forward. Good morning, Mr Young. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Don Young:** I wish to thank the committee and the clerk for making it possible for me to speak today. I appreciate that there have been many requests, many presentations. I hope mine will offer a fresh perspective.

My name is Don Young. I've lived in and worked in Toronto for 17 years now. I'm originally from Quebec, a reluctant émigré. It took a while to adjust to TO, but I've settled down. Local government had a lot to do with my decision. I've always been politically active but in Quebec, despite sympathy for many of the social objectives, I felt like an outsider. In Toronto, with its accessible political system, I found, like other immigrants before me, that everyone can get involved in building a mutually beneficial future. Toronto is a special place, a meeting place for diverse cultures, and its political system has been the key.

#### 1150

Premier Harris would probably classify me as a lefty, just the kind of person he would like to get rid of with this legislation. But again he is showing how dated his thinking really is. Post-modern politics, especially that which is close to the people, has gone way beyond the old dualistic battles between left and right. Unfortunately, yesterday's men can't see that. I only hope you are men and women of vision.

I try to approach every issue with an open mind. I don't like party politics because it forces people into camps, to toe the party line and support things that one really doesn't believe in. I'm sure many of you know what I mean. That's why I like local politics. In city government, it is possible to come face to face with

people who have different beliefs and to work together to find compromises to problems that really affect one's community.

I am familiar with municipal politics in Toronto and I have worked hard to share my knowledge with others. The closeness which local government has with its constituents is very important to me and, I believe, very much worth preserving. If people can't work in the system, they will be forced to put their efforts into undermining it. Instead of compromising with people who think differently, they will become the enemy.

There are many things that disturb me about Bill 103. I have obtained a copy. I have read it. I have listened to interpretations of it. I have thought carefully about it. I would welcome the opportunity to work on an alternative to this bad legislation, but citizens are not being given a chance. I can only cover a fraction of my concerns in the 10 minutes allotted. Therefore, I will approach it at the level of principle.

The most disturbing aspect of 103 for me is not amalgamation itself. For a long time, there has been need for a change. There are too many fiefdoms, overlapping jurisdictions and unclear areas of responsibility. There is need for disentanglement, more cooperation between the various bureaucracies and new divisions of authority for our elected representatives.

The most serious problems exist in the GTA. The Metro government is too small to deal with the bi-regional problems and too large to deal with local problems. A new integrated structure is needed for all of southern Ontario.

Everyone agrees that reform is necessary, but what philosophy should guide the process of reform? One of the most attractive elements of Conservative philosophy is its adherence to the notions of decentralization and demassification, something that it shares with the counter-culture and green movements. I thought big government was the enemy for Conservatives. Then why a megacity with the inevitable mega-bureaucracy?

The principle which I thought Conservatives would follow in this process of reform was that of self-reliance. Self-reliance is first and foremost a Conservative outlook, which this government is certainly applying to individuals and households. One only has to look at its welfare reforms for evidence. So why is it not being consistent in its mega-amalgamations of both municipalities and the school boards?

Self-reliance is even more appropriate for levels of government. Self-reliance in government is also known as the principle of subsidiarity, where the ideal is a network of self-contained and equal systems within other, larger self-contained systems. Within this cellular network, the one rule of thumb for self-reliant development is that what can be produced or worked out at local levels is what should be produced or worked out at local levels. If anything, there should have been a devolution of powers to the lowest level, not a monopolization of power at the highest. The objective should be the creation of equal entities, not one unwieldy monster.

No one with any ounce of honesty can say that this is not a massive power grab by the province. The trustee provisions pale in comparison to the absolute powers of

the transition team, who will be appointed by and be responsible only to the minister for an indefinite period. With this precedent, the minister and cabinet will continue to have substantial powers over municipalities well into the 21st century.

Crippling municipalities with downloading and then dangling a carrot of possible rescue if they head in the right direction certainly rules out self-reliance. Have Conservatives thought of what this will mean for themselves when they are trounced in the next election because of the mega-mistakes they have made?

"Why this philosophical inconsistency?" one asks. The answer was obvious after the mega-dumping. The new tax base had to be large enough to download most of the province's social responsibilities, but none of the power. With billions in liabilities shifted to municipal property owners, the provincial government could then fund its tax breaks to its corporate friends. Stripped of its reserves, crippled Metro will then have to sell off all of its assets to the privateers. It isn't the principle, it's the money which is important to the Harris government and its friends.

None of this reform will solve the major bioregional problems facing the greater Toronto area. Furthermore, once the megapolis is formed, all future democratic reforms will be impossible. The problems facing the GTA will never be solved in any democratic way because there can no longer be a discussion between equals. The only solution left will involve a similar coup by the provincial government, with the Toronto megasaurus eating everyone else. If the 905ers don't see the writing on the wall, they should. Of course, the crippled, powerless monster which the Tories create could simply be left to starve in isolation from its natural hinterland, but what would this do to Ontario's economy?

Because Conservative principles have been abandoned for the almighty buck, a scary new logic is driving this rationalization. Democracy is expensive and therefore must be replaced for the sake of the economy. Where will this lead? The mega-state? Unless you Conservatives plan not to hold another election because it's too expensive, you will be left to bear the brunt of your leader's megamadness.

I have many words that I would like to leave you with, but there is only time for one more, and that word is "effective."

The Premier is fond of reducing everything to a question of what is efficient. There is something very wrong with the word "efficient." The Fascists were efficient. They made the trains run on time. The Nazis were so efficient that they systematically exterminated over six million people. The word that truly progressive Conservatives should use is "effective." "Effective" sums up the very purpose of government. Government should relate to the people, not to the balance sheet.

Thank you very much for allowing me to speak.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward today.

JILL SHEFRIN

**The Chair:** Would Jill Shefrin please quickly come forward. Welcome, Ms Shefrin. I'm glad I could get you

in under the wire. You have 10 minutes this morning for your presentation.

**Ms Jill Shefrin:** Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today. I am a citizen of Toronto, a homeowner and a taxpayer.

I wish to express my concerns regarding the intentions of this proposed legislation. I am here because I am disturbed by the speed with which this bill and the others which are part of the same package of radical changes are being passed into law. Whether or not you agree with the changes proposed, and many of us, as you will have gathered, do not agree, there can be no justification for either the deadlines or the imposition of unelected trustees and an unelected transition team. These measures argue a lack of trust in and respect for both the electorate and the existing civic governments. Nothing I have heard or read justifies this lack of faith in either the fiscal or ethical practices of those elected municipal officials. If municipal government is to be substantially restructured, that work should be the responsibility of those elected municipal officials.

During the last provincial election campaign, Premier Harris said he would not eliminate local governments and spoke out in support of referenda as a form of public participation in decision-making. In Your Ontario, Your Choice, the government claimed to be firmly committed to using the referendum as a tool of increased accountability and improved public participation in the decision-making process. The Premier appears to have changed his mind on both these issues and has now put forward legislation for which this government has no mandate.

This government claims to be more responsive to the public, claims that eliminating civil service bureaucrats will both cut costs and open channels of communication, yet it is only after a major public outcry that the government has even agreed to full committee hearings on this bill. Again, referenda are surely a manifestation of direct government, yet when the citizens demand a referendum, their answer is that the results of such a referendum will not make any difference to the government's actions.

#### 1200

I don't want to be one of 50,000-odd voters in one ward trying to get the attention of my not-so-local councillor over urgent neighbourhood issues like street lighting, dangerous dogs, the acceptable size and noise level for planes flying overhead to the Island Airport. I don't want more expensive election campaigns which result in overt party politics at the municipal level.

Al Leach claims that the same services will still be available, but he's not saying they will be available at the same level or free of charge. The different cities within the Metropolitan region have different priorities. I live in Toronto rather than in one of the other four cities partly because, as a community, its priorities are closer to my own than those of, say, Etobicoke or York. The residents of those communities presumably prefer the priorities of their local governments. Local government should be just that — local — and able to respond to the needs of a manageable community.

I also live in a country which has chosen to provide certain services to the entire population. By putting the cost of any social welfare on the level of government

with the least revenues, this government is threatening the universality of those services and creating a system which will require greatly increased property taxes. Property-related services should be funded from property taxes, and income-related services should be funded from income tax. The application of property taxes to income-related services is retrogressive, not progressive, taxation.

Increased property taxes will drive many people away from the urban core. When I bought my house, the property taxes were a major factor in my decision. I ruled out certain neighbourhoods because the taxes were too high. Now taxes will go up, and go up substantially.

There are a number of flaws in the assumption that amalgamation will save money. For example, collective agreements will have to be harmonized. This will be a matter for bargaining, and until negotiations are completed, it is impossible to know what the costs will be. Civic employees are also residents of the city. They work hard, earn, by and large, a reasonable wage, and pay taxes to all levels of government just like the rest of us. Like the rest of us, they will try to maintain the best possible wages and working conditions.

The harmonization of computerized systems and services throughout the Metropolitan area will involve enormous capital outlay for either software conversion or the transfer of records from six computer systems to one new system.

Anyway, if this government is determined to make a priority of cutting costs and saving money to the extent of hailing the municipal referenda — the democratic process — as a waste of money, what justification can they have for spending \$8 million to publicize Bill 103 before it has passed into law, on top of the \$100,000 to KPMG for their study on the effects of amalgamation?

In 1996, the Legislature passed the Savings and Restructuring Act, which "gave authority to municipalities in northern Ontario, counties, and cities to decide how they are structured, their boundaries, and how many levels of government they need." Why, if the cities of northern Ontario were able to make their own decisions on structure, boundaries and levels of government, should the cities of Metropolitan Toronto have structure, boundaries and levels of government imposed on us?

I have visited New York and Chicago, and I have no desire to live in a city where poverty and crime are rampant, where people are afraid to go into some areas not just late at night but in the middle of the day. There is a reason Toronto keeps being rated as one of the most livable cities in the world. Why change it if it works? The municipalities are not in debt. They have already, over the last recession, cut costs and services.

A government that allows economic requirements an unconditional priority will end up with a community in which all humanitarian values are judged for cost-effectiveness. This is an embarrassment in a civilized western country which has no excuse for the numbers who live in poverty, greater poverty than can be cured by a provincial tax cut, especially when this will be more than offset by the municipal tax increase required by the increased burden of services downloaded from the province.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Shefrin. We have time for questions from Mr Gilchrist.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Ms Shefrin, for coming before us here this morning. We appreciate your time preparing and delivering the presentation. I have just a couple of things that your presentation raises. I'd be the first to agree that one of the benefits of committee hearings is the opportunity to have a bit of a dialogue and to make sure the opportunity to share information is there.

One of your points near the end of your presentation is, "The municipalities are not in debt." You may be surprised to know that the city of Toronto alone, as of their 1995 financial information return, is \$498,787,000 in debt. Contrast that with the city of Scarborough, which is \$3.9 million in debt.

Almost identical population, less than a 20% differential, yet somehow the citizens of Toronto — you clearly have come here today under the impression that there is no debt, yet you are carrying a debt burden that is over 160 times as great as the citizens of Scarborough. Yet the streets and the parks and the snowplowing, presumably, are the same. How can you rationalize the extraordinary difference in debt, which at the same time has led you to be taxed at twice the level of a citizen in Scarborough? Do you believe you're getting twice the quality of snowplowing and parks maintenance and that sort of thing as the other citizens of Metro?

**Ms Shefrin:** It's my understanding that under the legislation, municipalities aren't allowed to carry a deficit.

**Mr Gilchrist:** That's not correct, unfortunately. They can't on the operating side, but on capital projects they can carry up to 20%. Toronto has now built that up to half a billion dollars. Scarborough, on the flip side, will be debt-free by 1999. But Toronto, unfortunately, is half a billion dollars in debt, and that's one of the myths that's unfortunately confusing people.

At the same time, when they talk about the reserves and the prospect that's been raised in some quarters that the province will get that, let me tell you categorically, nobody is going to touch those reserves. The reserves are in place to address the existing debt. The province can't take it, and one of the tasks of the trustees is to make sure the reserves are not squandered or misspent and that they are kept associated to the debt obligation. So that's the reality.

The other quick point I'd like to raise with you: Early in your presentation you talked about referenda. The fact of the matter is, we still are quite committed to a province-wide, citizen-initiated referendum process. The hearings are going on right now. Both the two opposition parties on December 4 came out and said it was inappropriate to ever have referenda dealing with any municipal issue. They stated that in Hansard, and Mr Christopherson for the NDP, Mr Agostino for the Liberals, stated it to the Hamilton Spectator on December 4.

So that's the reality out there right now. The bottom line is that the referendum process will proceed.

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Order, ladies and gentlemen.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I hope you'll take the time to share your views before those committee hearings when the bill on referendum is finally introduced as well.

*Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Ms Shefrin has the floor if she so chooses. You have about a minute remaining if you want to use it. If not, that's fine too.

**Ms Shefrin:** All I would say is that I don't have to agree on referendums with what any party in the House says. I'm telling you my opinion on referendums, and this referendum.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Shefrin, for coming forward today and making your presentation.

The committee is in recess until 3:30 this afternoon.

*The committee recessed from 1207 to 1540.*

DAVID FARRANT

**The Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Would David Farrant please come forward. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Farrant:** Thank you very much. I thank the committee for this chance to speak about the very important matter of Bill 103. I direct my comments especially to the Conservative members of this committee and of the Legislature. My focus here today will be on how Bill 103 and other related government actions affect me and my family personally and how I believe they affect you and your families and your political party.

First, an introduction: I am 33 years old and work as a computer programmer for a private company here in Toronto. My wife is here also, Liliana Diaz, who works as a financial analyst for one of the major banks. We have a 9-month-old son named Nathan, who isn't here, but you must accept my assurance that he is the best baby the human species could possibly produce.

Last month we bought a house. That's actually a big deal for us. Liliana came to Canada 8 years ago without speaking English and had to start all over again in a new city and country. I grew up in a suburban neighbourhood near Yonge and Steeles, where houses were big and home ownership was important, one of those sprawling suburban areas where a kid without a car had to walk 20 minutes to buy a chocolate bar and 20 minutes back.

I always denied the appeal of buying a house, perhaps because it was always out of reach. But we've worked hard and we've been fortunate. Last year we chose to settle in a house and neighbourhood very different from the one I grew up in. We bought a modest 12.5-foot wide home on Gough Avenue, near Pape and Danforth in the east end of Toronto. We're a one-minute walk to the subway and we can bike downtown.

But what we really love is the neighbourhood. We're on a quiet residential street with maple trees and houses and families. We can walk in a few minutes to parks and schools and to the Danforth with its wide sidewalks, bakeries, bagels and baklava, hardware stores and hair salons, groceries, fruit and vegetable stores, sidewalk cafés, bars, pubs and dozens of restaurants. Everything we need and enjoy is a pleasant walk away, and all of it in a place that's as clean and safe and feels as much like home as a small town, and all of it within one of the world's great cities. We were amazed by this place and decided that it was exactly where we wanted to build our lives and raise our child.

I'm here today because the life we've chosen is threatened by Bill 103 and by other actions of this government. I will not review the evidence presented by other speakers, but I ask you to keep in mind the experts you've heard from, the studies of other cities, the examples of failed large-scale amalgamations elsewhere and also the disastrous effects of dumping social service costs on to local taxpayers.

I ask you to consider the possibility that the experts are right and Al Leach is wrong. It seems to me that if you're concerned about your health, you go to a doctor; if your car's engine needs a tuneup, you go to a mechanic; and if your city needs restructuring, you go to experts in urban studies like Jane Jacobs, Andrew Sancton and Wendell Cox.

Please listen to the experts, look at the studies and the statistics, but do not see this as an academic exercise. Think of the effect on places people love. Think of people like me and Liliana and Nathan choosing to leave or choosing to stay while neighbours move away and taxes go up and shopkeepers go bankrupt and services decline and the place we now love becomes a memory. We know it can happen here, because it has happened elsewhere. Please think of the harm to people's lives.

I hope I've given you some sense of how this restructuring affects me and my family, and I'll turn my attention now to how this bill affects you, the Conservative members of this committee and Legislature.

What if the experts are right and Al Leach is wrong? Those of you from Metro and your families will not be immune from reduced services, higher taxes and declining communities. Those of you from elsewhere gain nothing if the engine of Ontario's economy is sputtering. To what city might your children or grandchildren go to study or make a living? What will they find here in a few years or 10 or 20? If the experts are right and Al Leach is wrong, it will be less like the Toronto we now know and more like Indianapolis or Detroit or New York, cities damaged by policies very much like these. We will all pay the price of a Metro Toronto in decline.

I appeal to you also as MPPs who I assume wish to be re-elected. Consider the administrative complexity and the speed of this amalgamation and compare it to the family support plan merger. In this case, we're dealing with 54,000 employees and dozens of collective agreements, seven budgets totalling \$7 billion, seven different corporate cultures and practices, six different sets of zoning bylaws and levels of service. We'll be dealing with not one task, as in the case of the family support plan, but dozens that are essential to the lives of 2.3 million people living in areas as vastly different as my childhood neighbourhood and my current one, and you're going to ram it all through as fast as possible, whether the people affected like it or not.

Take the family support plan fiasco, multiply by 1,000, and you'll begin to understand the political cost to you of this move. By the time of the next provincial election, there will be cost overruns, tax increases, administrative bungles and gaps in services. Good luck to you if you're running as a Tory, one of 22 to run and lose in Metro, and just try blaming it on the hapless new megacity council. Even those of you outside Metro will not enjoy defending the creators of this embarrassing mess.

I appeal to you also as members of the Progressive Conservative Party, whose past governments tried to be progressive about what needed progressing and conservative about what needed conserving. They were conservative in another sense: They were cautious and thoughtful. They did not try to turn the province upside down in one week. They tried to consider what was right and for the benefit of all Ontarians. Perhaps that's why they held power for 40 years.

That is the tradition of the party of Leslie Frost, Bill Davis and of John Robarts, whose 1977 commission on this same issue said:

"The conclusion is that amalgamation inevitably would decrease the sensitivity of the entire system to issues and concerns of a very local nature. Since there are no strong arguments for administrative savings to be realized from such a move, the commission has decided to discard the amalgamation option."

I would like to make two recommendations. The first is to the inner cabinet: Withdraw Bill 103 and slow down. Avoid the political, financial and human cost of reckless change. Build on the emerging consensus, listen to the experts and get it right. Seek out the best ideas among the reports of Anne Golden and your own David Crombie and Joyce Trimmer. Let's have strong local councils that are truly local and responsive and democratic, and a GTA-wide coordinating body that is truly regional, like the original Metro. And let's do it within the next few years, not the next few weeks.

Why insist on the disastrous current plan when you can actually gain some political credit for saying, "We were mistaken; we now have more information; we have listened to the people and we want to do this right"? You would look human and democratic and concerned about doing the right thing. Imagine that.

My second recommendation is to all the Progressive Conservative MPPs outside of that inner cabinet. Insist that Messrs Harris, Eves and Leach follow the recommendation I just outlined, and if they do not, then stand against them. That is not unthinkable. I believe the Progressive Conservative member for Wentworth North is doing exactly that in the case of the Hamilton-area amalgamation.

But if the inner cabinet will not do the right thing, please consider voting against Bill 103 and against the downloading of social service costs. You would not be a renegade or a radical; you would be standing along with me and my family and neighbours, with your own constituents and your own personal best interests, with the experts, and with both the traditions of your party and its prospects for re-election. What a deal. You would be against only the inner cabinet, who are the true renegades and radicals. Do a great service for them and your party and yourselves: Examine the evidence, examine your conscience and do what is truly progressive and conservative and right.

I thank you for your time and attention here today.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much, Mr Farrant. Thanks to your wife for being here too. I think the courageous member for Wentworth North put it all in a nutshell when he said there is more investigation done in the purchase of socks than there was in the Tory proposal for amalgamation.

I think you really point to the potential disaster here when you compare the fallout from the disastrous family support program, where they basically dismantled everything and then put in something totally new. You made that analogy to the amalgamation thing. It's sort of a harbinger of things to come.

**Mr Farrant:** And this is on a much, much larger scale. Even where this kind of thing has been tried elsewhere and failed, it has generally been done at a slower pace and in a more reasoned way. This is a recipe for disaster.

**The Chair:** Thank you, sir, for coming forward this afternoon.

1550

### JOHN KLASSEN

**The Chair:** Would John Klassen please come forward? Good afternoon, Mr Klassen. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr John Klassen:** Thank you very much. Although raised in Manitoba, I've lived most of my life in Ontario and what happens here in this province matters a great deal to me. You might ask the question, why? I ask myself that question and I answer it by saying, "Because I like to read children's stories to my children and to my grandchildren and their friends." One of our very favourites, of course, is Robert Munsch's Love You Forever: "I'll love you forever. I'll like you always, for as long as I live." You add the next line: "My children you will be, my critic or your critic I will be."

The reason this becomes so important for me is because Robert Munsch ends up by saying that people are really what matters. I believe life means people, and people mean friendship and sustenance and love and hearing one another, not words, words, words, profits, profits, profits, rich against poor, pitting people against one another. That's not what life's about for me, and my guess is that that's not true for any of us here.

My decision to come to speak to you today arises from three communications I've had recently, one from Mr Harris, one from Mr Leach, one from Ms Bassett, and in all these three communications comes a phrase that's like a recording that comes from each of them, but I'm going to quote just directly from one, "We will make a decision according to what is best for the taxpayer."

Now, the communications also go on to tell me that amalgamation did not come out of the blue, that it's not a new issue, that, "We have consulted and done studies," but the way these words are used are like words used in polls. Let's remember, they are not value-free and they are very blunt instruments to do, in the words of these government spokespeople, very radical surgery.

I concede that amalgamation is not a new issue, so I want to talk about another amalgamation in this province that works. Some 30 years ago, the cities of Fort William and Port Arthur entered into a process that led to amalgamation: indeed, Thunder Bay. I was there. I worked for more than 18 months in a program that was called Town Talk, a model, by the way, that was used when the twin cities of Minneapolis-St Paul came together.

We worked hard and we provided a process for citizens of these cities to bring about an environment that was conducive to their needs as a caring and a growing

people. We didn't know when we began what the outcome would be. I think that's slightly different from where we are at the moment.

Let me go back to that phrase again that comes in these three letters, "We will do what is best for the taxpayer." Well, way back then, 30 years ago, what we discovered was that people in communities do not want someone else to impose on them what is best for them. As a matter of fact, they get very uneasy when someone wants to do what's best for them without being in dialogue and hoarding information.

This kind of sales approach doesn't really work for me. I get very uneasy when I am no longer a person, but a customer, a taxpayer, a voter. My sense is that if I can be reduced to those categories — a statistic, a vote — then I am no longer a valid person. I'm only a statistic and my energy dissipates, that is, it dissipates until you push me to the point where I am now.

To go back to my experience again of 30 years ago, we held hundreds of meetings in the Town Talk process: meetings in schools, meetings in community halls, churches and homes. We discovered that people could speak and could listen to each other, could find voice to speak to those in various communities, some who wanted to build a city that would be attractive to business, others who wanted a place for people.

What we discovered was that such interests need not always be at cross-purposes. If that's true, what then are the factors that foster groups to make common decisions? I would like to suggest that a large factor is the process. Of course, that also is not a new concept. Many have argued that the end never justifies the means but rather is a culmination of a vision based on values and necessities that invite participation of all.

You can see why I am having a great deal of difficulty with what's happening in the process that's being employed by the present government. You have used consultants to inform your notion of what will work. They seem to be telling you, "Move quickly, massively, with broad strokes," lots of promotional material containing few facts and in a style that divides people against people rather than supporting meaningful dialogue and cooperation.

The complex and real issues facing us can be dealt with democratically, in its own slow way. My understanding of representative democracy is that a people chooses leaders — usually majorities but not always — to provide a forum where meaningful conversation can be had and where people are participants and contribute to the vision.

That's why the assumptions in the communications from this government are so disturbing to me. I am more than a taxpayer, even though I have done that, sometimes grumblingly, for 40 years in this province. But when I am cast aside by words like "No matter what you say, we'll not be swayed from our agenda," I feel alienated, I feel angry and sometimes helpless and displaced. When you reduce me to being a taxpayer and I become less than a person with civic responsibility, then there is only one cost and usually that's referred to as the "bottom line" or "profits" or being "globally competitive." In that scenario you tell me how bad the economics situation is so that I can't afford something or I will pay more.

What a shame that we are being led to believe that the only way to change is to alienate, negate and demean. I know and I've experienced: The values that unite are more than dollars. They include human worth, creativity, trust and respect. On the street where I live I am made daily aware that there are many more costs than profits or dollars: the social costs, the human costs, the moral costs.

I call upon you, my elected leaders, regardless of the level of government, regardless of the party, to be representative of values that cannot be bought with dollars. I call upon you to be greater than those of us who voted for you and even now are becoming apprehensive about being bought by what I believe are false, or at least not proven, promises of tax refunds and reductions. I am more than a taxpayer. I want you to represent me as a person who cares for others, even as I believe you do, with all our diversity.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Klassen, for coming forward this morning. You've just gone a little bit beyond the allotted time, but I want to thank you for making your presentation.

1600

### JACK SNELL

**The Chair:** Would Jack Snell please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Snell.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please, ladies and gentlemen. Mr Snell has the floor.

**Mr Jack Snell:** Mr Chairman, members of the committee, I had a presentation typed out in full but I decided a few hours ago to change it. So I only have one page now and that consists of a recommendation, a request that I would like to make of the committee.

A request I would like to make of the committee is that you make a recommendation to the government of Ontario to withdraw all the legislation that they have tabled in connection with amalgamation. That's Bill 103 and Bill 104 and all the other legislation, if any of it has been tabled, that was announced during mega-week. Withdraw it for a period of time, and I suggest — this may seem excessive but I don't think it is — we need two or three years. I'm suggesting that the legislation be withdrawn and that no further legislation be introduced concerning these matters until January 3, 2000, and certainly not before a future general election has been held in Ontario.

I'm referring to anything having to do with amalgamation and anything having to do with education and Bill 104, anything having to do with compelling any municipality to adopt a system of market value assessment or actual value assessment, eliminating the business occupancy tax, reducing development charges and then the whole Who Does What package of general welfare assistance, social services, police services and so on.

I ask you and the members of the committee to submit the above recommendation to the Ontario government for several reasons. I and other people need time to deal with these matters, to get the information we need to formulate viable positions pertaining to these matters, to talk to other people in our city, in neighbouring cities and in some instances throughout the GTA.

A lot of work has been done, and where that is the case, any reports and studies that have been produced need to be made readily available to all people throughout the GTA so that all of us can have an opportunity to search for commonsense solutions to the problems that confront us and the differences that divide us. Our elected representatives at the municipal level, I'll acknowledge, have not done that great a job of doing that, but now I think the citizens are ready to pick up the ball and run with it and the local politicians are going to have to go with them.

My second point is that although these hearings are on Bill 103, the question of amalgamating the six area municipalities within Metropolitan Toronto into one large city absolutely must be considered in conjunction with and simultaneously with certain other questions that must be resolved.

In that regard, it makes no sense to me to have one giant English-speaking public school board for Metropolitan Toronto if the present Metropolitan Toronto were going to be eliminated but were not going to be replaced by one large city as proposed in Bill 103. It seems clear to me that eliminating Metro without replacing it with one large city is an option that will have to be considered. After all, that is precisely what the Golden report recommended. So although it may not be the best solution or part of the best solution, it is certainly an arrangement that we have to take a close look at.

On the other hand, if it does make sense to some people to have one giant English-speaking public school board for the present Metropolitan Toronto geographic area, without having either the present regional government of Metropolitan Toronto or a new city covering that area as proposed in Bill 103, I'd like those people to make their case so I can have an opportunity to hear what they have to say and respond to their proposal, talk with other people about it, read what the newspaper columnists have to say about it and so on.

But the question of who pays what portion of welfare assistance costs, and this is a further argument about why these things have to be considered in conjunction and simultaneously with each other, and other social service costs, which must be considered in conjunction with the question of who pays what portion of education costs, should be obvious. Crombie told the province to keep welfare and to let the municipalities pay for education, but the province has decided to do the opposite. You've seen how much newsprint has been used up on that issue. The answer to that should be obvious. These things have to be considered together.

I could go on and on. There are a host of points that could be made to argue why it is important that a decision about municipal boundaries within the present metropolitan area be delayed and there are a host of points that could be made to argue why decisions pertaining to all the matters set out above must be made in conjunction with each other and simultaneously with each other. But I don't have the time to make all of those arguments today. I will attempt to put some of those points down on paper, organize them into a coherent statement, add them to the recommendation that you have

in your hands and submit them to the clerk of the committee before the end of February.

During the very short time I have remaining, there are two or three very important points I would like to make:

First, your government has launched a juggernaut against us. In doing so, your government has treated us with contempt, that is, according to my dictionary, as worthless, as despicable characters. Is that your attitude? Is that the Premier's attitude? Even if it is, is that what he wants the historians to say about him: that he looked upon the people of Toronto as worthless; that he viewed us as despicable characters?

The second point, on the other side of the coin, is that although your government has launched a juggernaut against us and is treating us in a despicable manner, in doing so you have wakened us up, and we thank you for that. I personally appreciate that very much. I have been having more fun during the past five or six weeks, during which time I have been participating in the Monday night meetings of Citizens for Local Democracy, together with at least 1,500 other people, than I have had for a long time.

John Ralston Saul says that working with one's fellow citizens for the public good is the highest activity, the most meaningful endeavour that a human being has available to him in this life. He's absolutely right. There are thousands and thousands of people within a five-mile radius of this building who are involved in this project of working for the public good and who are really turned on by it.

The 1,500 people who come out to the Monday night meetings are just the tip of the iceberg. Each person who participates in those meetings is in touch with a whole lot of other people back in her own residential neighbourhood or in her workplace or in his social circle. Then there are other groups working independently of Citizens for Local Democracy, spreading all over Metropolitan Toronto and out into the GTA. Now we've started to have people coming in from other parts of Ontario.

That leads us to a critical question: Is the Harris government going to withdraw the bills that have been introduced to date and postpone the introduction of any further bills until the beginning of the year 2000, thereby harnessing the creative energies of thousands of people as we reach out to our neighbours in our own cities, in our neighbouring cities and right across the GTA in search of those commonsense solutions to the problems that confront us and the differences that divide us; or alternatively, is the Harris government going to continue to treat us with contempt and ram all this rotten garbage down our throats? If you do that, you do so at your peril, because this movement that I'm part of is not going to go away. It's going to grow and grow and will run right over you and your government.

**The Chair:** On that note, Mr Snell, we've already exceeded your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation this afternoon.

**Mr Snell:** A good note to finish on, Mr Chairman.

**The Chair:** Sorry that you were interrupted. I've asked for cooperation from the audience and I'm not getting it today as I have in the past.

1610

DOUG CARROLL

**The Chair:** Would Doug Carroll please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Carroll, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Doug Carroll:** My name is Doug Carroll. I'm a software developer and I have lived in Toronto for 39 years. I've mostly ignored political issues prior to this bill and this government. I've become active because Bill 103 would infringe on basic civil rights and is rife with problems, both technical and democratic.

My first point is that the bill solves a problem that does not exist. The problem being solved is described as excess municipal taxes, but those are set, collected and spent by elected councillors over whom we have direct control. If we wanted lower municipal taxes, we could demand them and accept the resulting loss of service levels. We have not asked for lower taxes and it is odd that the province would intervene to fix a non-existent municipal spending problem when we can fix it ourselves at a local level.

Regulatory overhead is supposedly a barrier to global trade, and to our useless status as a world-class city. We're expected to believe this problem is so bad it requires the complete removal of seven elected governments instead of a friendly push to fix minor differences, with any legal frameworks required available as requested from the province — requested, not forced.

If the Bill 103 approach made sense, a dirty kitchen would be cause to burn the house down. Minor regulatory issues can be fixed with a few calls anyway. There are no serious obstructions to business here, except where the intended business is harmful to the residents, in which case barriers are endless, many thanks to our councillors and staff.

The bill is not in agreement with expert opinion. What support exists for Bill 103 is from the KPMG report, which I hear was commissioned after the bill was under way. Clearly, its carefully disclaimed estimates did not motivate the bill, and the savings predicted, if realized, would be less than 5% of the combined operating budgets of the cities. This amount could be saved without a massive reorganization and would have been less if current 1996 figures were used instead of 1995. Staffing reductions form the main basis and that means lower service levels. Politicians cost a minute fraction of the total, far less than one serious mistake might if we had fewer full-time guardians of the public interest. KPMG notes that they were not asked if Metro Toronto should amalgamate.

The Trimmer report recommended strengthening local neighbourhoods and Joyce Trimmer herself disavowed any support for amalgamation. Al Leach sat on that panel. I'm not sure whether Derwyn Shea was also there.

The Golden report recommended a GTA-wide replacement for Metro Toronto, and definitely not amalgamation within Metro.

Wendell Cox, a leading US expert on amalgamation, has said it will cost us much more and damage our cities.

Professor Andrew Sanctor has criticized KPMG, saying its assumptions did not include many additional factors that would cost us more, not less, in taxes.

Voter-per-capita representation would be reduced and costs of an election campaign increased, making corporate sponsors or party support likely. The neighbourhood councils would have no power to spend or make bylaws.

There are no successful examples of amalgamation anywhere in the world. Al Leach, asked yesterday in the Rosedale United Church, was only able to name Metro Toronto as an example, which it definitely is not, since this is a two-tier government, with all its advantages. If he were right, it would suggest changing nothing.

Amalgamation is like hearing that people have been jumping off a bridge all day, trying to fly, and they are all dead at the bottom. "But," says Leach, "We have this theory that if you flap your hands on the way down, you'll become a bird. We've booked a jumping for you. Trust us."

We have a bill solving a non-problem by a method that doesn't work. What could be the real reason for this bill, since the PC members are not stupid and seem so well versed in arguments against it that I could quote Mike Harris or Al Leach in times past to make my case today?

What does the bill do well? The bill puts total control of seven thriving and responsible governments in the hands of the province for at least three years — I understand that to be about right — with the transition team. The appointed trustees have absolute power and are not subject to public review or recourse. They can hire and fire, set, amend or refuse all budgets, make binding contracts and appoint board members. They operate in secrecy and are directed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Al Leach, exclusively. They are not elected.

Who here would undergo a similar reorganization at a personal level? Can you imagine? All your cash, your car, your house, not controlled by you. Binding contracts you had to live with, executed without a chance to speak. It would be called slavery at a personal level, or confiscation.

Why would the province want this outcome? The province has struggled with the city of Toronto over many issues, such as rent control, reduced transit funding, hospital closures, welfare and unfair changes to provincial riding boundaries. The Metro cities are major centres of political resistance to the Tory agenda. In each case the cities have upheld core social values, and protected the people.

If the trustees control Metro, they can direct staff to implement Tory changes without delay, on fear of termination. Contracts can place core city functions in friendly hands, on profitable terms, and key staff can be replaced with more amenable personnel. The dreaded lefties can be excised in the sweep of reorganization. All this can be done in secret, without recourse.

The Metro cities have \$1 billion in reserve funds and, by downloading costs to the municipalities, the money will be needed to meet them. It will have been spent on provincial responsibilities without a need to actually steal it. Few objections will be voiced by a reorganized Metro as a series of new outrages are perpetrated if our democratic voices are silenced. The discretionary funds available to offset downloading costs can be dished out to good cities, while uncooperative cities starve. The provincial agenda will be threatening to oppose, and all power will be provincial power.

What is the real purpose of this bill? First, it dissolves seven governments considered to be among the best and most politically active on the planet, and second, it puts complete control of the cities dissolved, along with all their assets and staff, in the hands of exactly three people appointed by Al Leach. It delivers the cities into the hands of their frequent political adversary, with all their money ready to spend on funding the tax cut.

It suppresses public participation and confiscates public assets, ordinarily directed as part of an understanding that they will be directed by their elected representatives to things that should be spent on, and certainly not by trustees who operate in secret. It imposes secrecy and denies recourse on any basis. These opportunities all go by the common name of democratic participation. The bill, in all its clauses, denies common public access to essential processes we all must live with.

In short, the real problem Bill 103 solves is the right of the people to decide how their collective lives will be lived, known as democracy. It solves it for a government intent on repressive measures and a flood of ill-advised right-wing measures we will surely find objectionable. The bill is designed to make it difficult or impossible to focus our objections and to deny staff, time and funding to opponents. The bill is reprehensible and I advise its absolute rejection in the name of all we value here in Canada. Thank you.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Carroll, thank you for taking the time to come and make this presentation today.

**Mr Carroll:** My definite pleasure.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Leach says that all he has heard so far is that's it's a bad thing, this amalgamation, and that nobody has given him any evidence that it's bad. He's quoted as saying that in the Toronto Sun. You quoted a number of people who have spoken against it: The Golden report didn't recommend this; the Trimmer report authors are friends of his.

**Mr Carroll:** In any event, they didn't recommend it, either. Joyce Trimmer herself spoke out against it at the North York council hearings where Mel Lastman first came out against amalgamation.

**Mr Marchese:** You mentioned Professor Sancton; I referred to him as well. Professor Kitchen spoke to that. Wendell Cox, who I understand is not a very liberal type of person but a very conservative type of man, says this is a bad thing. What are we to make of this? The minister says there is no evidence to prove him wrong, yet all the evidence that we are witnessing and hearing says that it's bad thing. What are we to make of his response?

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**Mr Carroll:** The bill is not actually framed to meet the objectives that are stated as its purpose. Its actual purposes are to put Metro Toronto in the hands of the trustees for the better part of this entire reorganization phase so that their assets can be realigned and so that democratic control can be suppressed within the cities and so that major political opponents can be effectively shut out.

The expert opinions have nothing to do with the way the bill was formed because they have all been ignored. There is no expert support for this bill, as framed. It's exactly like the bridge analogy: We're being invited to

take a terrific chance with the entire quality of life that we've enjoyed in this city for as long as I've been alive, with no basis whatsoever.

**Mr Marchese:** We've seen some of the referendum results of the communities surrounding Hamilton.

**Mr Carroll:** Over 90% opposed.

**Mr Marchese:** A high turnout, I understand, higher than the general rate of municipal elections, and they've said clearly that they don't want to be subjugated. I'm not quite sure what this government is going to do, but listening to one of the parliamentary assistants, Mr Clement, he says, "Well, we've heard them, but there are a lot of other considerations that have to be put into the hopper."

**Mr Carroll:** Maybe a brick in the hopper would help. That's just a joke. In any event, what I mean is that the situation is they've had plenty of input from all of the people so far. The consensus in Flamboro and other areas was that they were faced with a combination of intimidation and unsuitable alternatives. The facilitators were essentially using Bill 26 as a basis for the threat of reorganization without their participation. They were brought to the bargaining table whether they wanted it or not, and they formed a consensus clearly against any public method to do so. They've actually acted entirely on their own, strictly on a democratic basis, to say an absolutely flat-out no, to amalgamation.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Carroll, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### FRANCES GLADSTONE

**The Chair:** Would Frances Gladstone please come forward. Welcome, Ms Gladstone.

**Ms Frances Gladstone:** What I have to say regarding Bill 103 has been said many times by many people and many organizations. Journalists, politicians, social scientists, including town planners, have all spoken rationally and logically against the concept of amalgamation. The only people who seem to favour this concept are those who stand to reap personal financial rewards.

It has been said by many experts that amalgamation will not save money. In fact, many cities which were amalgamated, such as Halifax, have shown that it is more costly. It has also been said repeatedly that amalgamation will destroy the quality of life as it now exists. I am here to state yet again the concerns shared by very large numbers of people in Metropolitan Toronto.

Should this bill pass, we have grave concerns for what will happen to this city and the quality of life that has been possible here. This is not to say that we experience perfection in Toronto — far from it. In a country as wealthy as Canada, there should be no hungry people and no one without housing. That is equally true for the province of Ontario and the city of Toronto within it. But what you are planning now will greatly exacerbate an already untenable situation.

Bill 103, with its proposal for a megacity, is a misguided concept. It is not known at this time if changes are necessary, and if they are, it is not known what form they should take. This government has employed many experts to study amalgamation of the six municipalities. Despite unanimous reports from all of them that there

will be no cost savings, this government plans to proceed with amalgamation. Why? What do you hope to gain?

Many of your claims for improvement have been shown to be blatantly false. Such arguments as too many local politicians, reduction of taxes, a previous promise to create a megacity and cost reduction are all inaccurate at best. Toronto has the highest number of residents per councillor in the province: 1 to 40,000, compared to 1 to 5,300 in North Bay, the Premier's home town. No promise for a megacity was ever made, and in any case this government was not elected to run local politics. In addition, property taxes in Metro Toronto will increase dramatically with downloading of social services unless money is saved through unacceptable reductions in these services.

Both the Crombie and Golden reports identified economic and administrative issues that are the biggest problem facing Toronto. Both recommended a single council for the greater Toronto area that could unify the region. Mr. Crombie stated that amalgamation without a proper regional structure was the worst possible choice to make. The government ignored Crombie's findings and went its own stubborn way.

There can be no effective cooperation or coordination among the municipalities and the regions without a regional structure. If anything is to be done — and it is not clear at this time that anything needs to be done — it must include all of the greater Toronto area and not just Metro.

But this government has made a destructive move even worse with its downloading package. Why would anyone outside Metro even consider working with us under the circumstances? Who in their right minds would choose to pick up a share of so onerous a burden?

Democracy in Toronto ended when Bill 103 was brought forward. From the day it was introduced, Metro Toronto has been under trusteeship. The largest locally elected municipal councils can now do nothing without the approval of a provincially appointed board of trustees. There was no consultation, no discussion, no approval, and the residents of Metro have been told that a referendum on the issue of amalgamation will be ignored.

The appointment of trustees was an entirely unnecessary move. Local government in Metro Toronto is a completely open process, with adequate checks and balances to prevent any form of thievery this government might have imagined. How would this government react if the federal government suddenly suspended its activities and appointed trustees to oversee its spending? I suggest to you that not only would you see it as a total denial of the democratic process but also as highly personally insulting. We are seeing, perhaps more clearly than ever before, just how fragile a concept democracy is. Lest we were in any doubt at all about this government's intentions, Bill 104 killed any uncertainty by placing the boards of education under trusteeship as well.

These draconian measures were taken for only one reason: The government knew that there would be strong opposition to these plans. To avoid this possibility, democracy was destroyed. The government-appointed trustees have the power to override any decisions made by either local or Metro councillors. This is neither right nor just.

This government has put forward a policy for which there is no rationale. There have been no cost-effective studies, no expert opinions to say that amalgamation will save money or be more efficient. In fact, in regard to the latter point, the opposite has been stated: that amalgamation will not save money or be more efficient, certainly not in the way this government is proposing to implement it.

Further, this government does not understand the magnitude of the change it is planning to implement. You seem to believe that at the end of the year a merger of 54,000 employees with different work practices, under new management, with a new board of directors will simply fall into place. But if this government thinks the transition will be either smooth or simple, it is seriously mistaken. The city council in London, Ontario, still has problems after three years with a much simpler merger of its public utilities into its civic government.

In Metro Toronto the task is far more vast and of much greater complexity. There are different needs, different cultures, different structures that will be difficult to consolidate. There are 116,000 bylaws and 60 collective agreements that will need to be unified. Selecting people for a transition team will create disharmony and increase vulnerability among people who then will have to continue to work together. This is a recipe for chaos. Metro will simply fall apart and nothing will function. Issues will be neglected, investment opportunities will go elsewhere and the public will have no one to turn to who can respond to their needs. Credibility will be lost.

It would be a sad mistake to believe that the decline in Ontario's capital city will not affect its credit rating. There will be tremendous anxiety and huge waste, and for what? To create a monster of a city that will be less effective than what it replaces, that will be more costly and require more management. This is a concept that has no rational basis.

By far the most destructive aspect of the government's proposals is that of downloading the cost of social services on to the municipalities. What will be the result of this ill-conceived plan? For Metro Toronto, it means financial disaster. As one example, family benefits are to be shared 50-50 with the province, half of a \$3.4-billion program. For this municipality it will be a dramatically increased burden. As well, hospital care has already suffered as a result of government cuts. People too sick to be moved are being sent home, often only to return to hospital again or sometimes to die. There are insufficient beds, there is inadequate nursing care and general decay of the health care system. Now the government wants to transfer all soft services on to the municipalities.

Over and over again you have been advised that this is not responsible behaviour. You have thus far chosen to ignore the opinions of even your trusted advisors. These costs do not belong to the municipalities. They must continue to be shared throughout the province. Metro Toronto cannot survive the new regime. The social services burden here is too great and would require the city to carry an additional cost of \$400 million.

Despite your assurances that this structure will benefit the municipalities, it is very clear that it will be extremely detrimental. Either taxes will have to be raised dra-

matically or Metro will go into bankruptcy. This city will suffer from a higher crime rate, empty office buildings as people leave to escape crippling taxes, greater crowding, fewer repairs and services, and it will become dingy and dirty and dilapidated, as so many of its American counterparts.

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Small businesses, which are already barely making ends meet, will have to close their doors. More people will be unemployed; more will require welfare. We will also see user fees, gutted recreation and social programs, darkened community centres, higher taxes and fewer jobs.

We have one of the most vibrant, healthy cities in the world and this government wishes to destroy it. We in Metro will not only sink under the imposed burden but will subsidize the rest of the province while doing so.

To further aggravate the situation, I understand that you now plan to replace most of the elected, paid municipal politicians with a volunteer council that will determine the needs and functions of this city. Many organizations function through the involvement of volunteers. However, they are not usually responsible for 2.5 million people and the huge variety of responsibilities that management of such a vast, complex structure would entail. In particular, a non-elected body of people should not have control of public funds.

Your resentment and hostility towards the city are incomprehensible but must be overwhelming for you to have chosen to implement such measures. It is obvious that the volunteers will be merely puppets of those who have the actual power to make decisions. Plainly you are out to destroy this city.

We are asking that you re-examine the concepts you have put forward in Bill 103 and reconsider its passage. Metro functions well as it currently exists. There is no need to amalgamate the six municipalities. This bill is not about greater efficiency or cost saving. Amalgamation of the six municipalities will not save the taxpayers money; on the contrary, in Metro Toronto and other municipalities the costs will be much higher.

This bill is about the change from a democratic society to a corporate-dictated society, in other words, a plutocracy. The goal of this government is to privatize publicly owned and run organizations: schools, parks, community services. The corporations are dictating this government's moves and you are following instructions well. The writing has been on the wall for a long time but no one has chosen to heed the message.

If this bill succeeds, we will see the impoverishment of our cities as the corporate structure grows ever richer. Make no mistake, this will happen. All you have to do is look at any large American city to see the end results of policies such as this government is promoting. This government was not given carte blanche when it was elected to mow its way through the province, destroying everything in its path. That is not what a majority means.

The only rational decision you can possibly make is to shelve Bill 103 and do a careful study to determine which, if any, changes are absolutely necessary. Before any are made, attention must be given to the reports you have already commissioned. Appropriate and adequate examination of them must be made and the people of this

city must be privy to the findings. If the populace then believes it is necessary to implement change, the transition must be gradual and carefully thought out. For the moment nothing is broken; there is nothing that you need to fix. Thank you.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please, ladies and gentlemen. You've gone beyond your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

### JANE ROUNTHWAITE

**The Chair:** Would Jane Rounthwaite come forward, and would the lady in green on my left please refrain from interjecting, just as I asked a gentleman this morning who was doing some cheerleading, albeit almost unbearable. I'd appreciate it if you'd refrain from doing the same thing. It's the rules of the Legislature. They're not my rules. Thank you.

Ms Rounthwaite, welcome to the committee.

**Ms Jane Rounthwaite:** My name is Jane Rounthwaite. I'm going to begin by telling you something about my background, as I believe it's relevant to why I'm here today to speak against the imposition of Bill 103. Like many of the people you have heard from in the past few weeks, I have never done anything like this before, as I have taken good governance for granted in this city and in this province.

First you need to know that I am a long-term citizen of the city of Toronto. I was born down the street at the Toronto General Hospital and I have lived here for my whole life, except for the three years that I attended Queen's University in Kingston. I have been a homeowner since 1979 and have lived in many different neighbourhoods in this city, including the Annex, Forest Hill, Summerhill, Rosedale, North Toronto, College and Brunswick. I understand the difference amongst these communities and what makes each of them special to their residents. I have also lived in the 905 area and I understand how it differs from the city.

Second, I would like to tell you that I am not a member of any political party, nor am I an opponent of true Progressive Conservatism. In fact, my roots are very blue and some of the most influential people in my life were old-fashioned Tories who believed in social responsibility as being part of their duty as Christians. My great-uncle was a minister in John Diefenbaker's cabinet, my great-grandfather articled in Sir John A. Macdonald's law office in Kingston and my grandfather, a dyed-in-the-wool Tory, loved and lived politics his whole life. At the end of his life he was totally absorbed by the coverage of the Watergate hearings. I remember clearly his outrage, dismay and disbelief about the way Richard Nixon and his gang of thugs had behaved because they thought they were above the law.

I understand in my heart that being a good Tory has nothing to do with going along with the high-handed arrogance of this particular government, which has the audacity to tell the people of Toronto and other municipalities who are fighting forced amalgamation that it will not heed their voices in this matter.

Third, I am a businessperson. I have an MBA from the University of Toronto, I am a former vice-president of a major Canadian life insurance company and I am currently the executive director of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, a well-established and highly respected national non-profit organization. While I am outraged at the perversion of tried and true democratic process that has been forced on us with Bill 103, it is as a professional business manager for over 20 years that I am going to speak to you today.

As some of you may know, business schools make extensive use of case studies as a way to demonstrate good and bad management practice. Often the cases are quite a mixed bag of both good and bad, as that's usually what life looks like. However, sometimes one reads a case which, after careful analysis, leads the rational person to wonder, "What were these people thinking and why did they do this?" I believe that if Bill 103 is passed, it is exactly what analysts will wonder about this government and their mega-mess.

Many members of this government pride themselves in being businessmen, yet with each new barrage of legislation they demonstrate that they do not understand the complexities of managing a huge corporate entity. Business schools set up special courses for small business because the practice of sound business management in a large organization, where one of the signs of success is the minimization of uncertainty and confusion, is not the same as the rough-and-tumble of entrepreneurship. Large institutions, like large ships, cannot manoeuvre in the way that a small business, let's say a car dealership or a Laser sailboat, can. That's a good thing because the consequences of bad decisions in a big organization are much larger, impact far more people and are much more expensive to fix.

Based on my understanding of the recent package of bills and proposed bills that this government has dropped on us in the last few months, I can only conclude that there are some fundamental principles of good governance in a large organization that this government obviously does not understand.

The first basic principle is understanding one's responsibility and accountability. In most large public corporations the top managers must answer to the shareholders, who exercise their power through a board of directors which has legal responsibilities for ensuring that things are done in a certain way. These top managers know that they are merely the custodians of the assets of the enterprise. In privately held companies, which are usually much smaller, top managers are often the founders and the owners, but even they are ultimately answerable to their customers.

It seems that this government thinks it owns the province and that by winning a majority in the last election they somehow bought the "company" and it's now theirs to do with what they will. Because many in this government have been owners of small businesses, they seem to be confused about their new job, which is to be a good custodian. In Bill 103 this government gives the top managers of the new amalgamated city of Toronto, who are their appointees and not our elected officials, the right to be answerable to no one, as actions

and decisions of both the public trustees and the transition team cannot be questioned or reviewed, even by a court.

The second point about the proposed amalgamation which defies conventional business analysis relates to the financial aspects of the deal. From start to finish, the numerical analysis just does not cut it. To begin with, any business student taking Corporate Finance 101 can tell you the importance of matching the volume, seasonality and quality of revenues and expenditures as closely as possible. While I know I am alluding to changes proposed in other legislation, the entire package is hard to separate, as each impacts on the other, which is yet another fundamental principle of good management practice. You can't fix up salaries in the sales department by tearing the guts out of accounting or production.

**1640**

The one-time cost of implementation of Bill 103 has been estimated at \$500 million. In my last corporate job I was the vice-president and project manager for an operation which moved the operations of one company of 1,200 people from Toronto to a western city. That project cost \$50 million for severance, recruiting, emptying office buildings and then having to leave them empty because there's a glut of real estate in Toronto, moving furniture and people from one location to another and fixing any problems that arose along the way. That project took a full year to plan and another year and a half to execute. It was planned and thought out by the people who were actually doing the front-line work in each department, which meant that all those little details which keep the wheels moving were understood and taken into account by the planners.

Based on my experience with the planning and implementation of that very successful operation, I do not believe that the proposed amalgamation of six cities and one borough will be done for only 10 times the cost of moving one company, for a number of reasons.

First, none of the municipalities wants this, which means that unwilling people will be pressed into making this happen. Second, the speed with which this government is proposing to make these changes precludes the type of careful planning that is needed for a smooth transition. Mistakes in an operation of this magnitude are very expensive to correct. Third, the hidden costs associated with the confusion of merging seven entities will be huge. Low staff morale can take the wind out of the best-run organization. Imagine what it will do to one or seven in chaos. Remember what SkyDome ended up costing us in the end, and it wasn't nearly as complicated as what's being proposed here.

Lastly, this government cannot even make a solid business case to support all these changes. There is no empirical or expert evidence that can assure us that this will save the taxpayer any money at all, but rather a mass of examples of exactly the opposite. Further, I was not at all surprised this morning when I opened my Globe and Mail to read that the province has seriously underestimated the ongoing increase in costs to the municipalities of these changes. It appears that a cost-neutral program is now going to cost us nearly \$900 million more a year. If any employee of mine had ever made that type of error

in his or her cost-benefit analysis, they would never have had their proposal approved.

It is because the empirical evidence does not support Mr Leach's claims of improved effectiveness and the fact that this government cannot get their numbers right that I must question what they are really doing and why. This is where this government breaks the final rule: They are not being honest with us. That is why the decisions of the trustees and the transition team must be above the law, because good governance can easily withstand the test of scrutiny.

As a manager I must be prepared to have my staff and board question each and every decision I make and I must be able to explain why, and "because" is not good enough as an answer when one is dealing with issues that have such a far-reaching impact on so many people's lives.

I love this city. I am proud of being a Canadian. I am dismayed by the actions of this government in their disregard for the democratic process that has made this country great and that has made this city the envy of the world. I implore this committee to listen to what hundreds of people like me, who have never done this before, are telling you when they say that something is rotten in Bill 103. It's too much at once, it's too fast, no one wants it, and most important, it's bad government. Please help the citizens of these municipalities stop Bill 103.

**The Chair:** You've exceeded your allotted time. I want to thank you for making your presentation today.

#### MARC COLLISTER

**The Chair:** Would Marc Collister please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Collister. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Marc Collister:** I would like to thank the committee for allowing me to speak today on Bill 103. I am here today to ask the committee to stop the passage of this bill; that the committee not allow it to go on to a third reading; and that the committee will, instead, let Bill 103 die. I believe there will be no benefits brought about by Bill 103 for the citizens of Metro Toronto, only drawbacks. I also believe that Bill 103 is a direct assault on the democratic style of government that Canada was built on.

I question the motives behind the provincial government's push to amalgamate the municipalities in Metro Toronto. I understand that Al Leach did not even commission any reports on amalgamation until after he had made the decision to go ahead with the megacity. He cited saving money and ending duplication as his reasons. The report that Al Leach did commission after he announced his plans did not corroborate this reasoning. The Globe and Mail reported that the chief author of this report said, "There has been no amalgamation, of which I am aware, in the current fiscal environment that would demonstrate the certainty of savings in Metro Toronto."

Am I to understand that the only certainty with the megacity is that it will cost taxpayers \$200 million to implement, with zero guaranteed savings? In fact, from what I have read, it will cost more to run an amalgamated city of this size than it currently costs to run the individ-

ual cities. Al Leach and his staff have used Chicago and New York City as models for amalgamation. Well, US census data indicate that it costs more per capita to run a large amalgamated city than a smaller city.

If there are savings to be found through the reduction of inefficiencies, why do we need an amalgamated city to eliminate them? Our city councils are quite capable of doing this independently of the megacity. It's a function of the job they were elected to do. Literature I have seen suggests that the councils have been eliminating inefficiencies and continue to do so.

On the issue of duplication, perhaps you can explain to me how the Scarborough fire department duplicates the work of the Etobicoke fire department or how the North York sanitation department duplicates the work of the Toronto sanitation department. As none of their jurisdictions overlap, I cannot see where the duplication would come from.

I voted for the Tory party in the last election. I don't admit that often any more. At that time I understood them to be committed to stronger local government. I can now see that this is not the case. I fail to see how making elected representatives further removed from the people they represent makes a democratic government stronger. I fail to see how increasing the average number of constituents a councillor is responsible for from 32,000 to 52,000 will strengthen a democratic government. This will only increase the responsibilities of each councillor, giving them less time to deal with specific issues within their communities.

The new city council will set up neighbourhood committees, but Bill 103 does not indicate what role these committees will serve. Will they be elected? If not, who will appoint these committees? Whom will they be accountable to: the members of the community or the councillors? Bill 103 does not indicate whether these committees will be effective, will have any power to make binding decisions, or whether they simply make recommendations to city council that the councillors will be under no obligation to follow. This simply seems to add an ineffectual layer between the citizens of the community and the councillor who is supposed to represent them. Again, I fail to see how a democratic government will be made stronger by this.

The six municipalities are very diverse, with many distinct communities within each. How can an amalgamated city, with only 44 councillors for 2.3 million people, address each community's specific needs? The higher-density municipalities of Toronto, East York and York have different needs from the lower-density municipalities of North York, Etobicoke and Scarborough. Can we be certain that within an amalgamated city the concerns of both urban styles will be equally addressed?

The current local councils were elected to run the affairs of the cities. A part of running cities is preparing budgets as the councils see fit. These councils are accountable to the people who elected them and are aware of this as they put these budgets together. If citizens do not approve of how city council spent their money, they have an option of not re-electing them.

1650

There is a problem with appointed trustees being given the power to amend these budgets and have the final say

in these budgets. The trustees, being appointed, not elected, are not accountable to the people of these communities. Therefore, as they don't have to worry about being re-elected, they have no incentive to keep the best interests of the citizens in mind. The trustees are accountable to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, therefore they will have the best interests of the minister in mind.

With this situation the Minister of Municipal Affairs will have control of the cities. The city councillors will not even have the power to promote an existing employee. I ask you, how is this democratic? Al Leach was elected to the provincial government, not the municipal government. He has just decided he would run the cities without the consent of the citizens.

Metropolitan Toronto will have to incur the expenses of the board of trustees as directed by the board of trustees. Our own elected officials need to obtain approval for their budgets, but the board of trustees is being given a blank cheque to be approved of by themselves. What is even more disturbing than that is that decisions made by the trustees cannot even be challenged in the courts. They will, in effect, be above the law.

This sounds like the democratic process is being ripped out of Metropolitan Toronto and control of the municipalities is being given over to the provincial government. While there may be nothing legally or constitutionally wrong with this, morally and ethically it is wrong. How can the minister's conscience allow him to destroy democracy like this?

If Al Leach is determined to exercise his control over some level of democratically elected local government, perhaps the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto could be his target. It would be easier and more cost-efficient to dismantle a single municipality than to consolidate seven. It could be turned into a coordinating body as opposed to a governing body. The individual cities would remain intact, with a proper amount of representation, and the Metro board could coordinate joint responsibilities to ensure there is no duplication present.

In conclusion, the passage of Bill 103 is not in the best interests of the citizens of Metro Toronto. It will increase the cost of running the city while destroying their communities at the same time. It will also set a precedent for the dismantling of our democratic processes with blatant disregard for the citizens these processes are in place to serve. For these reasons I beseech you to stop the passage of Bill 103 now. I thank you again for the opportunity to speak.

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** Thank you very much, Mr Collister. It's very clear that the minister has not persuaded you of the merits of the proposal in Bill 103. What we have heard throughout the last year or so, leading up to this moment, is that the status quo is not an option, so this government has to make a choice. We have to do something. We have to make a change. Can you help us out with your thoughts as to what direction that change should take?

**Mr Collister:** Changes within the municipality I believe should be the responsibility of the municipalities. We elect municipal government and it's their decisions that can bring about changes within the municipality. I don't necessarily think it's incumbent upon the minister

to dictate to the municipalities what those changes should be. He could work with them to try and find a common ground, but I don't think he should be telling them what to do.

**Mr Parker:** If the municipalities, on their own, developed a plan that was similar to Bill 103, would that be reason to go ahead with it?

**Mr Collister:** It would be more of a reason because that would be our elected representatives on a municipal level deciding how to deal with municipal issues. So yes, that would be more of a reason to go with it, but not being forced to do it.

**Mr Parker:** Is your concern then with the process more than with the form? If the municipalities liked it, would it be okay to go ahead?

**Mr Collister:** Not necessarily. My biggest issue, I have to admit, is the process, is the fact it's being forced on to the municipalities. I have just recently begun to look at the actual specifics of what amalgamation would mean. What I have seen so far, I don't agree with. While they haven't agreed with it, if it was a good thing, if there were pros to it, I feel they would agree with it. I don't know if that's necessarily an issue, because they obviously don't agree with it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Collister.

### RORY SINCLAIR

**The Chair:** Would Rory Sinclair please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Sinclair. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Rory Sinclair:** Thank you very much. My name is Rory Gus Sinclair. I'm so new at this, I didn't even know I was supposed to give you all a copy or that it was my option.

I live in the Major-Harbord Street area. I am a small-time contractor. I moved into a derelict house six years ago and revivified it, keeping its original character and much of its interior character. I say this not to tell you what kind of a hero I am but to let you know that I might be bold enough to say to you that this city needs people like me, and I dare say the province needs people like me, if the city is to remain a viable entity.

Knowing what I know now, I would like to be able to say that I thought this whole amalgamation idea was a terrible one from the start, but I didn't. The truth is, I was grudgingly sympathetic to the notion when it was first broached. I was, in short, one of the silent majority this government claims to represent, and therefore am someone whom this government has lost in its subsequent haste, its extraordinary clumsiness and what I can only call disrespect of me as a resident of this city. I'm not here to yell at you. I'm just telling you how I feel.

The province appears to be saying to me something like this: "We're going to change where and how you live with this blueprint here that we cooked up in three weeks or so and you're going to like it; just wait and see." I have never before engaged in political actions of this nature. I have never felt compelled until now.

If some members of this government have been able to discount some of the protest about these measures because such protest emanates from a so-called usual gang of suspects, you should know that I am not one of the usual gang, although let me add parenthetically that it

was the usual gang, if I may call them that, who signalled the clear and present danger, to me anyway, about the concerns I should have about this. I'll be eternally grateful to the Citizens for Local Democracy for that.

Let me say off the top that if what I am about to say covers some ground already covered by others, I apologize. No one has told me what to say, so if it is repetitive, perhaps it means that quite a few people have these same concerns. I want to emphasize that I appreciate the opportunity to address you, but I have some fears on that score as well. I know that my voice is mouthing some words, but am I being heard? Why do I have this awful feeling that I am talking about the weather on the Titanic?

A little illustration: Back in the late 1970s — this is a little departure — after *Urban Cowboy* came out, there was an enormous number of country music knock-off artists, some of whom, in country music's desire to become homogenized and make it in the big music world, even got country music awards. Some, like Olivia Newton-John — remember her? *I Honestly Love You* — even came out and said they hated the old nasal country music, while continuing to accept awards from a group that had been singing nasal songs all their lives and who, in my opinion, had their fingers on the pulse of who their real listeners were, nose or no nose. It seemed ungrateful at minimum.

I remember the response of barely concealed rage of the old-line Grand Ole Opry lineup and the cheers that greeted Justin Tubb, the son of the great Ernest Tubb, as he sang the anthem *What's Wrong with the Way that We're Doing it Now?* That, dear members of the committee, is the refrain with which I want to characterize my submission.

That this government proposes to make changes of astonishing breadth and depth is of no debate. I personally might characterize these proposals as ill conceived, illogical and that they will forever change for the worse the city I love. Although I came to these opinions slowly, giving the government the benefit of the doubt many times before full fear struck, I will put those characterizations aside for the moment. Might I make some observations on the fear that has been engendered in me by the unseemly haste with which this government has made these proposals?

First it seems to be a given, as the honourable member Mr Parker has said, that the status quo is not an option. I don't remember the question being asked, especially when Fortune magazine — I'm sure people have told you this — says it's the most livable city on the planet. The status quo is working pretty fine. What's wrong with the way we're doing it now? Thank you, Justin Tubb.

I am sure the committee, whether or not individually they carry any animus to the city, has to recognize that the city is quite simply the envy of the world. It is a city that works, and it works, in my humble little opinion, because it has found an absolutely wonderful way to mix the overview of a Metro council with the local metre-by-metre attention to details of the local council system. Yes, it's a little messy, but that's the nature of democracy.

1700

May I remind you that Winston Churchill, a Tory, in case you need reminding, thought messiness was the nature of democracy, while I am also sure you can remem-

ber that Mussolini got the trains to run on time. By this I do not mean to take a cheap shot at you guys. This does not mean to imply that you are Mussolini or much less that I am Churchill. Arguing by analogy is essentially flawed. All I mean to say is that efficiency is only part of the equation. Sorry, honourable members of the committee, the status quo is fine with me. What is wrong with the way we're doing it now, really?

Merely saying that it needs changing doesn't cut it. I would have thought there are members of this government for whom the well-worn phrase "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" might mean something. The proof that it works is in the accolades this city wins and the envy with which it is viewed throughout the world. Why on earth are you messing with it? Might I suggest that you go find something that really needs fixing.

Second, given that the proponents of these measures want to make such far-reaching changes, one would have thought that a fundamental principle that has evolved in the Canadian way, which is a pragmatic, and I'll use the word "commonsensical," approach to politics — this has been the Canadian way of doing things since Confederation — would be something like this: that the people being affected by such far-reaching measures should have some pretty serious input into the process. The people being affected are I and my brother and sister citizens of Metro, and this is pretty fearsome stuff emanating from a legitimately elected government of this province. I emphasize "legitimate" and I emphasize that I agree that the government is charged with the overview of municipal affairs.

If I were to leave you with one abiding thought from my little two cents' worth, it's this: It's little guys like me you have scared silly by these tactics and it is a fear I have never felt before in my life. Recognize that you have that power to scare me and that it doesn't soothe that fear to realize that you are probably really nice guys at home and nice to your kids. I cannot believe that it's your intention to scare the hell out of me. Know that I will never be a party to that kind of demonization. I don't mean to demonize you, but recognize there are a lot more like me out there, and it's this constituent's visceral fear of his government and it's not conducive to civil dialogue, let alone the exchange of considered opinions. This is a situation that should not be encouraged by any government if it values civility and respect and democratic values.

Worse, I worry that somehow it doesn't matter to you. I know it matters; it's got to matter to you but I feel that it doesn't. Convince me otherwise. To hear a government put into law a bill that encourages referenda in the municipal arena and then say to me and my fellow citizens that although this government likes referenda, it doesn't like Metro referenda, and even if we did hold one it wouldn't affect this government, I feel like the Grand Ole Opry lineup. I feel disrespected.

Third, my feeling is that if this government is serious about making Metro stronger, then it will need guys like me on board to help with those changes. In other words, if this is going to fly, you are first going to have to recognize that little guys like me are feeling that their city is being torn out from under them on what appears to be a whim. For you to succeed, you have to carefully

bring us along and you've got to give us a chance to have meaningful input. In that respect, these hearings cannot be seen as an end. This is far too serious and big to merely hold hearings here and then go on — excuse me again — and blunderingly implement. I don't want to believe this, so I am saying to you that just as you are not demons, we are not demons for wanting to participate in how our city is configured.

Fourth, where on earth is the fire? Surely this is Rome built in a day. Where did this timetable come from? By whom are we being invaded? Are the Fenians at the border again? One of the big contributing factors to the fear I carry with regard to this is that my elected municipal representatives are no longer ultimately responsible for what they were elected for by me and my brother and sister citizens, and it was, I'm sorry, the provincial government that chose to do this to me.

The government may again attempt to assuage the troubled waters by saying, "Well, the trustees are really nice guys and they won't really be interested in meddling in the petty affairs of how council works," but this being peacetime and all, and that there has never been a suspicion of malfeasance of an individual, let alone mass scale, on any of the councils that would warrant such a move, and that the councils of all the cities and one borough have not been fomenting insurrection, you've got to admit that the trustee, in a fundamental way, abrogated a fundamental democratic process. It's a fact. The government may not have taken this decision lightly, but they never told me so. Surely when the timetable is viewed as a two-year process, such as when Metro was first set up in the 1950s, then such abrogation would never have been necessary. QED.

So much for the backdrop of bad feeling. Now to a little substance —

**The Vice-Chair:** Would you close off now. You've exceeded your time. Could you just close off now, please.

**Mr Sinclair:** I apologize. I end with the last three sentences. This is to you, Mr Parker. To those who would say to me, "All you ever do is knock down plans of this well-intentioned government; if you're so smart, what's your alternative?" I would answer with two observations.

It is the government's unseemly haste that has placed opponents of these proposals in a reactive posture, and all I can say is, "For God's sake, slow down." Coming up with an alternative to these whirlwind measures on the spot is to play the same game the government appears to be playing: some kind of race to beat the Jeopardy clock to see who can come up with a city governance plan in two minutes.

I believe that this is a mug's game, and if changes must come, then this isn't the way to go about it, for changes of this nature require patience and a will to bring everyone affected on board.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, I must interrupt you. You've gone well past 10 minutes. Thank you very much for being here this evening.

MARY NEWBERRY

**The Vice-Chair:** Can I have Mary Newberry, please. Welcome to the committee, Ms Newberry. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Ms Mary Newberry:** My name is Mary Newberry and I'm a long-time resident of downtown Toronto. Thank you for giving me the chance to speak. This weekend I attended a neighbour's informal gathering and found myself in conversation with an elected politician who offered me some advice in anticipation of appearing before this committee.

He suggested that I find what he called a constructive approach. He advised me that although I may feel differently, the members of the government who are bringing in these changes do not want to hurt me, ie, the person on the street. They might want to hurt other politicians, he particularly suggested Sewell, but besides them — he's not really a politician, is he? — I am not the target.

He advised me to consider my concerns and attempt to present them in a manner which could be addressed within the megacity blueprints, since in his opinion it was a fait accompli. So I thought about my major problems with Bill 103, and I think there are two, out of which others spring. The first is the severe reduction in local municipal politicians and the second is the manner in which it's being implemented. I have difficulties with other aspects of the package, Bill 104 and the changing of taxation, but I am sticking to the amalgamation.

I have been reading some of the reports in the paper and listening to people here today, and I understand that a lot of my concerns have been expressed by other people, so I'm not going to reiterate the same things that other people have done very well. I thought, as my friend suggested, I'd think of ways to address the lack of representation.

The first thing, which somebody else has mentioned, is the idea of the volunteer neighbourhood committees, similar to existing ratepayers' associations. I like ratepayers' associations. My partner, who runs a small business in the neighbourhood and feels that the community mostly supports his business, belongs to the ratepayers' association as a way to pay this back, but he notes that this ratepayers' association is emphatically not representative of the ratepayers, let alone of the community as a whole.

An elected politician must please many more people than the small number represented by a ratepayers association, and it is the influence of all, or at least a lot of these people, that helps to make the decisions which shape the neighbourhood. The people who are local politicians are concerned with details, little things like how many parking spaces are on a given street, which way does the traffic run, how much is there, what level of noise is acceptable, and is the current zoning still appropriate for the community? These are messy, untidy little issues which never go away. They change from time to time and it's the job, and I mean job, of the municipal politician to be sensitive to all these and other tiny details which are really important to the people whose daily lives are touched by them.

The point of all this is that the payback for an elected official who represents a community well is that she or he is re-elected. Volunteers have their own agenda for being there. These other details are time-consuming, and few of us would be willing or able to put in the amount

of time that would be needed to take care of all these things and to take care of other people's concerns properly. That's why we pay our municipal councillors to do it, and a committee of volunteers cannot replace an elected representative.

1710

That brings me round to my second difficulty with the amalgamation and that's the provincial government's method. I said we pay the municipal and city councillors to do a job which we elect them to do. The trustees we have placed above them are also paid by me, but I didn't elect them. Then I hear that the government has been censured twice for ignoring proper parliamentary procedure: once for printing pamphlets that implied that Bill 103, and also Bill 104 but basically the package, was already law and another time for a similar offence involving a fax campaign.

To top it all off, we are told they will ignore the results of the referendum, and as I understand it, it is only a law introduced by this government that allows us to have a referendum. It seems only fair to assume that they did so because they believed in process, but not in this case. That's the big deal, process is the big deal, process is troublesome, time-consuming, messy and full of stumbling blocks, and that is right. If you don't like process, then you don't become a politician in a democratic country.

Another aspect of the reduction in the number of elected politicians is the changing cost to run for election in the new and larger municipalities. My understanding is that at the moment you can run an effective election and be elected for around \$30,000. I've bumped into some of these people in my community and adjacent communities, and they often drive now — I didn't bump into them in that aspect — but they often drive second-hand cars or bicycles like me. Income isn't the only factor of course in determining like-mindedness, although it isn't like-mindedness in this situation, but income often plays a large part in what concerns us on a day-to-day basis, and that's what municipal politicians look after.

I like the idea that these people of influence are not people of affluence. The new configuration puts my friends out of the running, ever. So I haven't exactly been able to do what my friends have urged me to do. I can't think of a better alternative to democracy and elected officials. But I don't mean to totally discredit what my friend said to me. His words did make me realize that you on this committee and in the provincial government may be listening, so I said what I thought was important.

One last thought: I have a friend, another one, who came by the other day. He has a small child and he was very concerned with what will happen as a result of Bill 104. He said it was very hard to convince people that things could ever change so drastically that they would have such what he considered would be severe and drastic results, and I'm one of those people that find it hard to believe that there's change. I have an easy personality and find that solutions to my own problems, generally speaking, come fairly easily.

Like the people he was attempting to convince, I think that things will work out, but I know that is not always true. Maybe I will find a way to live with the changes. If

my neighbourhood changes and I'm forced to leave — and I plan to live in my house and grow old and die there, as my partner's mother did — then the likelihood is that I will find another place to live and be happy, but I don't want to do that and I can't believe I said it. But what a terrible thing and how many others will not survive, and who am I to think that I'm immune.

As society changes, or my city changes so radically around me, will I still keep my composure? As Frances Gladstone pointed out earlier, it's not as if there aren't already people that are suffering badly in our city, and these changes don't address those issues. There are still going to be people suffering and suffering, in some cases, even worse.

Neighbourhoods, communities and cities are delicate things. I love Toronto. I've loved it since my family moved here when I was eight. It was so exciting. I heard the runup to a recent CBC Radio program about the transformation of medieval Spain from a society renowned for its openness and religious toleration to one torn apart by religious intolerance. It must have seemed impossible to the community at the time that such changes could happen, and that took a long time. You didn't recognize it even as it happened. It's not that all change is bad but it is always a good thing to listen to the people who are going to be affected and it's not a good thing to scare them. That is me, that is us.

**Mr Colle:** Your last comment — I'm not sure whether you said you were afraid.

**Ms Newberry:** Well, there's fear that comes out of the process, I think, more than the actual proposals. It's not that I think the proposals aren't dangerous, they are, but the process is what actually raises the fear, when you feel that the government that is proposing these ignores official procedure and is not cognizant or respectful of the parliamentary procedure. That I think is where the fear comes from, and the quickness and the trustees.

The idea of the trustees reminds me of the way large corporations tend to behave when they want to fire somebody. People recommend that they go in and close off the office and escort the person out of the building, and they often do that with people who are long-time employees and it develops an enormous amount of resentment, and that seems to me what the trustees are doing, for the municipalities. I think it said in the paper yesterday that it was just something like, Leach didn't want to take any chances. Well, that seems very disingenuous and it raises fear on my part. What is he afraid of?

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing before us today.

#### LYBA SPRING

**The Vice-Chair:** I call on Lyba Spring, please. Welcome to the hearings.

**Ms Lyba Spring:** Good afternoon. I realize that I'm addressing you at the end of a long day. I also realize that you have probably been listening to the same arguments, stated somewhat differently, over and over again. At first I thought I would be innovative — a poem, perhaps a song to brighten up your day? But the risk of being seen as frivolous was too great and the stakes are much too high.

What are the stakes for me? Let me tell you a little about myself. I am a middle-class person living in a nice house in a nice neighbourhood in a 28-year-old marriage. Pretty straight, eh? But I am also one of those citizens who would be prepared to pay higher taxes if it meant that the services that have been available to the people of Metropolitan Toronto could be salvaged. In other words, I don't want this government's tax break if it means that everything I was raised with will no longer exist — not for me and not for my children. So there are my politics on the table.

Regarding Bill 103, again let me begin with the personal. Although we have been living in the city of York for the past 16 years, we have always sent our children to city of Toronto schools, taken them to a city of Toronto library. We've swum in Toronto pools and eaten in Toronto restaurants. I have no allegiance to the city of York. I do not think it is a viable entity, because its tax base is so pitifully small. You are aware, I am sure, that York taxpayers pay the highest property taxes in Metro. So you can see that it would mean little to me to lose the city of York.

Nevertheless, I want the opportunity to say so at a public meeting in front of my friends and neighbours in said city of York. I want to say this to my local councilor. I want to vote on this matter. I was rather hoping before Minister Leach proposed that all the municipalities amalgamate that there would be an opportunity to have a referendum over amalgamating the city of York with the city of Toronto. Some York councillors actually ran on that platform in the last election.

In other words, I want a voice. Bill 103 is taking away that voice. More insidious still, it takes away our elected voices. You have already heard other citizens decrying the lack of democracy in your naming trustees to oversee local moneys spent before even passing this legislation. In naming a transition team, ie, an appointed group of individuals, you are effectively superseding our elected representatives. We eagerly await Lloyd Axworthy's stiff note of protest to the Ontario government. This type of Hong Konging is undemocratic to the point of benevolent dictatorship.

Perhaps if I tell you about my work, you can put my anger into context. I work for the city of Toronto in the department of public health. I'm a sexuality educator. This means that I see people from all walks of life who need information and/or help. For example, I work with prostitutes, both in my office and in the streets. I counsel young people in a sexual health clinic. I teach children in school about their changing bodies. I teach high school students how to avoid the pitfalls of early sexual experimentation. I distribute condoms. I listen to sexual abuse disclosures and report them. I write pamphlets. In short, the taxpayers of Ontario currently pay me to do what I consider to be very important work.

1720

What does my work have to do with Bill 103? You probably do not want people to address this committee on any other issue but the amalgamation of the municipalities. But it is impossible to address amalgamation out of context, namely, ignoring the announcements from what is now known as mega-week. If the new megacity has to

pay for the public health work that I do, they will have to strip it down to its bare bones. The bare bones will be programs that are designated by law, for example, sexually transmitted disease follow-up. The health promotion work that I do will very likely fall by the wayside, and my job along with it. "Oho," you are thinking, "this woman wants to save her job." Well, of course, and not only because we have a family to support, but also because of the devastating loss to the public if these crucial programs are cut.

Take the example of puberty and other sexuality programs taught by public health staff in schools. If they go by the wayside or are taught by board of education staff, children may not continue to come forward as they do now to tell of adults or older teenagers who are molesting them. Say a child does not disclose the abuse. Although some children do manage to heal without any intervention once the abuse stops, others do not. Most of the prostitutes I work with, for example, have indeed been sexually abused. Several young people I have worked with in the past 15 years have, as a result of their abuse, been sexually assaulted as teens and adults, become anorexic or bulimic, attempted suicide or mutilated themselves to diminish the psychological pain.

What will happen to those really troubled 13-year-old kids I see in school who trust me and then come to my office for help? Right now I help them by sending them to clinic: for the morning after pill, for birth control pills, for an HIV test or for a pregnancy test. When there is no longer a public health presence in Toronto schools, these and other serious health issues are unlikely to receive the attention they do now.

Yesterday's *Globe and Mail* said about HIV infection that a "significant number of people must have been infected as teenagers" because the median age for new infections is now 23. That is, half of all new cases occur in people 23 and younger. They were infected in their teens and it takes something like 10 years for the virus to show up. We need to give the message from puberty on about postponing intercourse. If they do have sex, we need to hammer home the message about consistent condom use. My fear is that one big Toronto will not be able to afford to pay for this work. But we will all end up paying for it in the end, as we lose the battle against teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and sexual violence.

Let's get back to the more mundane business of enumerating the arguments you have been hearing day after day since February 3: Not one of the 25 recent reports on governance in the Toronto area supports amalgamation. With the offloading of soft services to the municipalities, taxes will inevitably increase while services are reduced. The megacity paves the way for the downloading of soft services. You could never stick it to smaller municipalities; they would quickly go bankrupt.

The new megacity's politicians won't squawk. The opposition will have been removed and/or silenced. Amalgamation itself will cost a fortune in time and money. It will not save the taxpayers money because the bureaucracy needed to run it will have burgeoned. The inner core of Toronto will wither and die as business flees. Even the board of trade said so, for heaven's sake. But you've heard it all before, so why should I bother?

To be frank, I have no reason to respect the Conservative government of Ontario. They pretend to have the best interests of citizens at heart but in fact trample over their rights, pitting the rich against the poor. I have watched services shrink and seen people shrink with them as they line up for the food bank behind my office. I have no illusions about what you are doing here today; you are going through the motions. The day these hearings opened Minister Leach said "unless there is some information that we are totally unaware of, and I don't believe that there is, then we will be moving forward with our agenda." In other words, it's a done deal. So who done it? Who profits?

If taxpayers in the big Toronto cannot pay for the soft services, the surviving services will of course be privatized, which is what this game is all about anyway. Friendly tenders will stand to make big money. The union employees and the benefits that they fought for will be history. What have we seen as the hospitals shrink their staff and sell off hospital services one by one? Has any of you had a relative in the hospital recently? I have. It has become a dangerous place to be.

Let me just conclude by saying that I wanted my day in court despite the clear message that I would not be heard. I have felt too much anger with nowhere to put it. But I should give the last word to my mother. She's 88 and she has never been a political person. That was my dad's place. My mother has a friend who requires 24-hour care. Her weekend caregiver was a single woman raising two teenagers. She was just getting by on welfare. She was a nurse in her native country. When she was accepted into a gerontology course she was ecstatic. But when her welfare was cut by 21.6%, her dream of becoming a professional in Canada evaporated. My mother's friend reported that the woman spent that whole weekend in tears. My mother's comment: "That Harris, I hate him." She hates him for the waste of human potential. She hates him for his inhumanity.

Bill 103, like the omnibus bill before it, allows the Harris government to finish the job of dismantling the "I help you/you help me" way of life that was so painstakingly built, so that everyone could have access to the basic necessities of life. If Bill 103 is passed in its present form, life as we have known it in this city will lie in tatters at our feet.

**Mr Marchese:** I appreciate your taking the time to come and make this presentation. I appreciate the link you're making with the downloading. A number of people of course aren't talking about it because we're dealing with this particular bill, but the interlinking of the two is very much there, and you're just one of many who obviously understands that.

You also raise another important point that I raised, and that is that Monsieur Leach says he's not been convinced by any evidence because he hasn't seen it, yet deputant after deputant brings forth evidence, built around experience and referring to other experts who say there is no evidence that this is a good thing, and he's disregarding it. What's he looking for?

**Ms Spring:** As the French say, Il s'en fout pas mal — he doesn't give up flying.

## LINDA SHEPPARD

**The Vice-Chair:** Good afternoon, Ms Sheppard.

**Ms Linda Sheppard:** I'd like to say that I really appreciate having the opportunity to come down here this afternoon and make my comments to you about Bill 103.

My name is Linda Sheppard and I have been an active resident of the Beach area of the city of Toronto for over 20 years. While I have been close to local politics from time to time since about 1972, I don't usually involve myself in such a public way as speaking at committee hearings. However, I was so dismayed by the actions of the Harris government in introducing Bill 103 that I felt compelled to place my name on the list of speakers, and here I am. The main reason I did this was because, in my view, we are not facing an ordinary political situation but one where a line has been crossed that I am really very concerned about.

The line I refer to is one where a political action has been taken that flies directly in the face of fundamental democratic principles. I feel that Bill 103 is a direct attack on the basic nature of democratic process and, frankly, I was enraged by it. I find it absolutely astonishing that one level of government would presume to destroy the existing form of local government in six municipalities plus Metro, an area with a total population of over 2.3 million people, without any, and I repeat, any, consultation with those citizens affected by these changes. In my view, this action strikes at the very basic fundamentals of how change should be brought about in a democracy.

While my appearance here today stems mainly from my concern about the need for democratic process, I am also aware of other reasons to be opposing Bill 103, and while I know you've heard many of them over and over, I wanted to just note the few that had resonance for me.

First, not one study to date, to my knowledge, has recommended amalgamation of the six local governments. Second, most knowledgeable critics state that 2.3 million people is not an efficient or cost-effective size for an administrative unit of local government.

Then there is the anti-democratic nature of the trusteeship and the transition team. There is the lack of attention to governance where it is really needed, in my view, and that's between the municipalities of Metro and the rest of the GTA.

Last is the measures the government is enacting at the same time as Bill 103, namely, the downloading of inappropriate services to the municipal level, as well as the establishment of AVA, both measures that experts argue will increase the local property tax burden of the citizens.

1730

I know that I needn't go on and that you are well aware of the concerns of the opponents who have appeared here to date, but there were one or two other things I did want to say.

I come from an area of the city that is well served by its local councillors. The citizens where I live know they can depend on their councillors to call regular neighbourhood meetings, especially if there is an issue of local concern. The residents know that these councillors will come to these meetings with real information and that they will listen to the concerns.

I have heard vigorous debates in my neighbourhood about stop signs, traffic flows, restricted turns, the boardwalk, holding tanks etc. Of course, everyone doesn't win their position, but everyone who wants to, does get heard. This is a quality of life in our city that we don't want to lose and, more important, I firmly believe this is the essence of local democracy in Metro and the reason Toronto works as well as it does as a city. People care about the details.

There's one last point I wanted to make this afternoon, and that is that I am not opposed to change and I am not committed to the status quo. But I am committed to change that is brought about by democratic process. So I have the following suggestions to make to the Tory members of this committee and I hope you might take them back to your caucus and Mike Harris, and especially Al Leach.

The first is to put Bill 103 on hold and extend the terms of our current municipal politicians for a year. Appoint a public committee to hold hearings into alternatives for delivering good, efficient, cost-effective and responsive local government in Metro, and also to look at how to link our local governments to the rest of the GTA. Mandate the committee to have hearings across Metro and to hear from all interested parties, individuals, community groups etc.

Also, mandate this committee to commission research from recognized academics in the field of municipal public policy. Ask this committee to come forward with at least two viable alternatives, put these options to the public for debate and then a vote, because it seems to me that if you instituted a process like this, you would end up with a system of local governance that the majority of the citizens of Metro could accept. You would have been true to the fundamental principles of democratic process and, who knows, maybe some of your local Tory MPPs might even get re-elected.

Those are the end of my comments. Again, I thank you for the opportunity to come down here this afternoon.

**Mr Parker:** Thank you very much for appearing here this afternoon. I take your point that most knowledgeable critics state that 2.3 million people is not an efficient or cost-effective size for an administrative unit of government, and I want to follow up on that. In Metro, for some time now, we've lived with the Metropolitan level of government. That now represents about 2.3 million people and carries out about 72% of the municipal spending in the Metro area, and I'll say it does 72% of the municipal business in this area.

That's a number that has grown over time; the size has grown and the share of the municipal business conducted at that level has grown over time. Have we been doing the wrong thing in moving in that direction? Should we get some of that out of Metro and back into the municipalities?

**Ms Sheppard:** Mr Parker, I don't really feel I have adequate knowledge to answer that question, but I have been following all the information as it becomes available in the press and elsewhere, and I would see that as something that would have to be looked at really carefully. Maybe you're right. Maybe it has been a mistake. But none of us knows at this point because we haven't had any public discussion around those kinds of issues.

**Mr Parker:** We did carry out public hearings last spring in the aftermath of the Golden report. We went out to various communities and sought some guidance as to what people thought of the Golden report and what they thought the future should be. The result that tended to come in was that most people said, "The status quo is not an option," but they wanted to keep their particular piece of the status quo. So that whole process was not very effective in leading us to any sort of conclusion, other than we had to do something and that leaving things as they were was not satisfactory.

That led us to the Crombie Who Does What process, which was an exercise in bringing together some of the best thinking we could find, to delve into these questions and the result of that was the recommendation that goes into Bill 103. How is that process flawed?

**Ms Sheppard:** I think it was flawed because I, for one, was not aware that, after the Golden commission's report, you were having public hearings. I don't recall my councillor ever coming to my area and setting up a meeting and saying, "Look, this is what Golden recommends." My recollection from Golden is that the recommendation was that Metro be abolished and what was to follow that was not really clear. But I'm not really aware that happened in my community and I'd be very interested if other people in this room and other speakers were aware that process had actually happened in their neighbourhoods.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Sheppard, for appearing here today.

#### JENNIFER LICHT

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Jennifer Licht, please. Welcome, Ms Licht.

**Ms Jennifer Licht:** I would like to thank the committee for giving me the opportunity to speak on the subject of Bill 103. My name is Jennifer Licht, and I have lived and worked in the city of Toronto for over five and a half years now. I have just recently gone back to university to pursue a second degree in sociology and urban studies.

I want to tell you that I am a person who shies away from public speaking and getting involved in political issues, yet over the past three months I have gone from discussing Bill 103 with professors, students, friends and family, to writing letters to my elected representatives at all levels of government, to attending public meetings every week, to sitting in the visitors' gallery in the Legislature, to sitting here in front of this committee today, and all for one reason: to find some way to stop the passage of Bill 103.

I would like to recommend to the committee that this bill be stopped. Bill 103 is anti-democratic by nature and implication, and its impact would mean a far-reaching and irreversible downward spiral for this city.

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a bit more in detail about how and why I came to Toronto, because I think details can be essential in creating a bigger picture.

Before Toronto, I had been living in Montreal, precisely for the reason of attending university. Having come from the United States, I was struck by many things

about Canada, in general, which I experienced through Montreal: the different languages and cultures of the city, the vibrant street life with its many cafés and bars, and the comparative safety of the city streets.

While at university, I met my partner and after graduating we decided to move to the Toronto area where his family lived and there were better employment prospects. Now, I have to say many people in Montreal warned me about Toronto. They said that Toronto was just like an American city, that you could hardly tell the difference.

Immediately, I had images of New York, a city I had often visited and had also been born in. I remembered the garbage all over the streets and sidewalks; the lack of trees and greenery; iron bars over windows and doors; boarded-up, abandoned businesses; old, broken-down buildings, city blocks, and sometimes whole neighbourhoods; and especially my apprehension in walking through unsafe areas of the city, which seemed to switch back and forth from block to block.

1740

But when I got to Toronto, this was certainly not what I found. Instead I found clean, safe streets, many multi-ethnic residential neighbourhoods sprinkled with trees and parks, all within walking or bicycling distance to a great mix of small shops and restaurants representing all different cultures as well as socioeconomic backgrounds. Being a bicyclist myself, I was excited to see bicycle lanes and more bicyclists on the streets than I'd seen in other American cities. In short, Toronto was nothing like what people had said, and over these past years I have found Toronto to be a very comfortable and livable city, just like Fortune magazine said.

At this point I could give you facts and figures from numerous studies and authorities, none of which have indicated that amalgamation of the seven municipal governments in Metropolitan Toronto would be a good thing.

I could bring your attention to the fact that the only real detail in this bill is in the 15 out of 23 pages which deal with the sweeping and undemocratic powers bestowed upon the trustees and transition team, powers which are outside the jurisdiction of the courts, powers which make a mockery of accountability by giving these appointed officials, paid by municipal taxpayers, directive power over elected representatives for over a year.

I could direct you to the contempt this bill has for the legislative process as it establishes the powers of the trustees over the financial affairs of the municipal governments effective retroactive to the date of Bill 103's introduction, not the date of its passage.

I could bring your attention to the loosely defined powers given to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, powers which are subject to interpretation outside of local democratic processes and wholly without accountability.

I could bring your attention to the lack of detail in the description of how the amalgamated city would actually function, the one-sentence line referring to another tier of government, the neighbourhood councils, but failing to describe whether these councils would be appointed or elected, what their powers would be or what was even meant by a neighbourhood.

I am sure you already have all this information, so instead I would like to tell you a story as told to me by my father.

This story is about another city, the city my father was born in, grew up in and lived in until he was just about my age. The story begins with a large city which had a mayor and council for the entire city, and five boroughs, each with its own locally elected borough president who took care of local borough issues and finances. Each of the five boroughs had its own division of the departments of public works and parks and other such authorities.

In the early 1970s this city decided to centralize these departments and remove administrative powers from the boroughs to the city. At the same time, borough presidents were given dramatically less power, that is, financial decision-making power, over their local areas. Very soon people like my father noticed changes in their services. For example, if there was a pothole on your street, whereas before it would have taken about a week to fix, with the new centralized system it could take up to one, two or even three months to fix, as long as you made enough noise, that is.

At the same time, because there weren't sufficient state and federal funds to cope with social inequities within the city and there was no access to resources beyond the city limits, the city was forced to use its municipal tax base to address these inequities. You see, taxes began to go up across the entire city but only certain areas benefited, and only somewhat, while many boroughs, like where my father lived, were largely ignored. There was an increasing resentment which grew. People began to feel as though they were paying more and more taxes but getting fewer and fewer services in their own neighbourhoods.

Transit fares would increase on some routes but not others; some neighbourhoods all the way across the city in another borough would get funds, but not others. There was nothing the citizens of the boroughs could do, because they had lost local budgetary control and the centralized bureaucratic system would not listen to their concerns.

My father remembers the increasing anger he felt at the city he had grown up in, the disenfranchisement he felt, as though the city had turned its back on him and many others who had helped to build it. People started to leave in great numbers — urban flight, as it has been called — and as people left the tax base shrank even more, but the need for funds continued to grow, as those who remained were increasingly poorer. Taxes went up but people were getting less and less. Finally my father and his new family left too. He left behind his relatives and his roots because he just couldn't afford to live there any longer.

It took five to 10 years for this city to go from a decent bond rating to zero, and nearly bankrupt. In a large megalopolis with neighbourhoods which varied across all lines, overcentralization resulted in an unhappy, frustrated citizenry because the city did what it thought was expedient overall without listening to the various local needs in all the neighbourhoods in each of the boroughs.

Many of you probably know by now that the city of which I speak is New York. Many of you might be think-

ing, "But New York is a great global, cultural and economic hub, a great place to visit," and I would agree with you. But let me tell you, as great as New York is to visit, I would never want to live there, and this is something I never want to have to say about Toronto.

I don't want my city to be taken away from me as my father's was from him. You might say it will never happen to Toronto, but it's funny how easy it is to lose sight of details, and before you know it the big picture doesn't look the same any more. It's funny how a few unattended potholes here and there can turn into huge, gaping holes throughout the city. I don't want this to happen and I don't think anyone else does either.

I don't want to look back in five or 10 years and point to Bill 103 as the beginning of the end of local democracy, accessibility and accountability in Toronto, the beginning of the end of a vibrant, livable city. Do you want to remember, yourself or your children, how you had the opportunity to stop the passage of this bill but didn't? I don't, and that is why I am here speaking to this committee today.

I ask you once again, please take your opportunity to stop Bill 103. If you won't do that, at least let the people who live in this great city have a say in its fate. Let the people decide.

**The Chair:** You've used up your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming before the committee this afternoon.

#### LEE ZASLOFSKY

**The Chair:** Would Lee Zaslofsky please come forward. Good afternoon, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Lee Zaslofsky:** Let me begin by saying that I strongly oppose Bill 103. I'm here to urge you to recommend to the Legislature that the bill be scrapped immediately. I urge you also to recommend to the Premier that Al Leach be immediately relieved of his duties as Minister of Municipal Affairs. He should be replaced by a minister whose mandate is to work in a democratic, respectful manner with the people of Toronto and surrounding municipalities to come up with a well-thought-out plan for the future that has broad support among the citizens of the area.

I realize that this would constitute a major retreat by the Harris government. That is because the government has recklessly committed itself to an unworkable plan and then resorted to a strategy of bullying and bluff to push it through.

Nevertheless past governments, including Tory governments, have sometimes recognized that they have ventured into a blind alley and have had the courage and common sense to come back out of it.

I'm not going to rehash for you the glaring faults and mistaken premises that mar Bill 103. Many others have already done that and no doubt many others will do it again. Nor am I going to indulge my wish to characterize in detail the sinister, undemocratic aspects of the bill and its presentation that first shocked and then enraged so many people.

Suffice it to say that in regard to Bill 103, as in so many other initiatives, the Harris government has acted more like a would-be dictatorship than like a democratic

government. Rather, I would like to invite you to accompany me as I make my rounds visiting the various community organizations and institutions with which I'm involved. Each of them will be affected by Bill 103 and the other bills introduced around the same time in an orgy of legislative activity that was clearly designed to baffle and intimidate the people of Ontario.

**1750**

Before I begin my rounds, a word about myself: I have lived in downtown Toronto since I arrived in Canada 27 years ago. I have been a tenant in Cityhome, the city of Toronto's non-profit housing, for the past 10 years. I have been employed for the past seven years as a community health worker at a community health centre serving the downtown area. I want to add also that I am a gay man, but I was counting all the years, and I don't know how many years I've been a gay man. I just want to throw that in.

I have a large number of community involvements and I want you to accompany me, if you will, and only in a virtual sense, to three of them. The first is Scadding Court Community Centre where for the past six years I have been chair of the board of management. Receiving its core funding from the city of Toronto, the centre is owned by the city. None the less the city does not administer it directly but rather delegates that job to the board, which is composed of community members elected at an annual general meeting of the centre's members.

At our last board meeting we discussed the megacity proposal. We decided to oppose it. We believe that the megacity will not be nearly as responsive to the needs of our community and to Scadding Court as the city of Toronto is now. We believe that we can expect cuts to our budget. We fear that our reserve fund, accumulated patiently over the years, will be seized by a megacity desperate for money because of the immense costs of downloading. We fear we will be accused of that dread condition known as duplication, since the downtown area has a number of community facilities, all of them heavily used, and bullied into some form of downsizing.

We cherish our relationship with the city. We have good access to our local elected officials, two of whom sit on our board. We are concerned that our future will be gravely compromised if the megacity goes through. Most of all we are concerned that our community will be devastated by the effects of downloading and that many more of our neighbours will be impoverished by them.

As we leave Scadding Court, I hope you will walk with me up through Kensington market to Doctors Hospital, where I am the chair of the community advisory committee and, as such, a member of the hospital board. Although the megacity proposal does not touch directly on that hospital's future, it is part of a series of measures that, taken together, seem like a murderous attack on our community, because as at Scadding Court, the future of this community institution is in grave doubt.

Recently the community advisory committee arranged to develop a plan to mobilize the community in the event of the hospital's being ordered out of existence. We have good reason to believe that the Health Services Restructuring Commission will issue such a direction. We believe that such a decision would be a mistake since it

would destroy the only community hospital left in the western part of the city.

The destruction of the hospital would be a serious blow to our community in other ways as well: jobs lost, excellent programs done away with, a unique approach to our diverse community lost in the shuffle. Megacity is of a piece with this threat to our community. It will bring homogenization, downsizing and destruction.

Finally, please join me as I catch a streetcar and then a bus on my way to city hall. We're having a meeting of the downtown community health board and we've invited the AIDS prevention groups that the city funds to join us for a discussion of the megacity. I've been a member of the community health board, and its representative on the city of Toronto board of health, since 1992. Elected at an annual meeting, the community health board's eight members and four associates are residents of the downtown who are interested in health issues.

AIDS is issue number one. Thousands of our neighbours are HIV-positive. All the rest of us are affected in one way or another, or in many ways, by AIDS.

The city of Toronto has done something about AIDS. Through the public health department, the city runs a whole series of programs with funding from the province. Most innovative among them is the more than \$1 million of city money — property tax money — the city spends yearly to fund AIDS prevention. The program was developed in the 1980s as part of a city AIDS strategy. It enlists community members from almost all of Toronto's diverse communities in the fight to prevent the spread of AIDS. It supports them in developing and implementing strategies that are tailored to the needs of particular communities so that they can get the word out in the most appropriate ways.

This program, together with others like needle exchange, work. They have played a major role in holding the spread of AIDS to levels far below comparable cities in the US.

At our meeting with the groups that do this work, the message was clear: Megacity would never take on the funding of such a program. No other municipality in Metro has such a program, though the city has repeatedly urged them to initiate it. The decision of the meeting was to oppose the megacity because it would likely mean the death of the city's AIDS program and therefore the illness and death of more of our neighbours.

Thank you for accompanying me on my rounds. Everywhere I go, in every meeting I attend — and I attend quite a few, although I stay home and watch TV sometimes too, just like Mr Leach — the message is similar: The Harris government is waging a kind of war on us in Toronto, stripping us of our institutions, our community programs, our democratic rights.

At every meeting the mood has gone from one of shock, past fear and despair, to sheer determination. We know we are up against powerful forces, that for some reason the government of Ontario has decided to attack us. We are not sure we can save what we hold dear in the city of Toronto, but we won't let it go easily, we won't give up without a fight, because it's important to us. We love it too much.

This fight did not need to happen. It can be ended any time. Please do what I recommended above and bring peace to our city.

**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** Thanks for coming down and making a presentation to our committee here. Mr Leach on the government side, in order to promote Bill 103, has been saying that this will save us money, will be a more efficient system, will have better representation, that taxes will be lowered, as a matter of fact. We, as the opposition in the House, have been saying: "This is not so, but if you have that information to prove what you're saying, let's have it. Give it to us so that people can be apprised of that information." Agencies have also been saying what we've been saying, that this is not the case. Now we have a ministry employee saying that the government didn't give you the full facts, up to \$900 million.

Do you believe that until the government comes clear with this it should abandon this idea, withdraw the bill and really go to the people, have a referendum on the issue? Do you feel it's important enough to have a real, binding referendum on this issue?

**Mr Zaslofsky:** Yes, I do. I think we saw today in the *Globe and Mail* — you allude to the \$911 million that someone in the government seems to have forgotten to mention as they talk about the savings that are going to be brought about by amalgamation. I think there are other grotesque lies and evasions and concealments in the megacity plan and that the people of the city and the people of Metro have seen through it, that they want to come forward and say no to megacity. Their only concern is that they've been told by the government they elected that no matter what they say, they're going to be ignored.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Zaslofsky, for coming forward this evening.

#### JON SHORT

**The Chair:** Would Jon Short please come forward. Good evening, Mr Short. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jon Short:** Thank you. My name is Jon Short. I am a student at York University. I have prepared a few, as it turns out, probably quite brief remarks to make about the amalgamation of the cities of Metropolitan Toronto.

First I'd like to make it clear that I am not opposed in principle to the idea of amalgamating the current cities of Metro Toronto under a single government, particularly if it were to include the current 905 areas surrounding Metro Toronto. However, I have a number of serious concerns about the way this government has proceeded with its version of a megacity and about certain provisions in Bill 103.

Some weeks ago I received the provincial government's pamphlet One Toronto, in which Metro Torontonians were assured that amalgamation would "make it easier to do what we do best: live and work together in a modern, safe, prosperous community." The government wants to give residents of Metropolitan Toronto the feeling that they have nothing to fear from Bill 103 and that they will be net beneficiaries of the amalgamation process.

However, in my view the behaviour of the government belies any such assurances. If I am sceptical regarding the government's intentions, it is due to the contempt for democracy the government has shown in the process of passing this legislation. This government has given the impression that it has something to hide in the speed with which it has acted. Rather than a careful and open approach, the legislation has been hurried through the Legislature as if to avoid public scrutiny.

The government first announced that it would oppose municipal referenda on Bill 103, then later decided that it would allow them, but stated that the results would have no impact on its behaviour. Likewise, although the government has allowed for public hearings, it has declared, through its representatives, that it will not be influenced by what is said, putting my presentation today in the strange position of appearing irrelevant before it was ever made.

#### 1800

The citizens who appear before this committee are being asked to give the government reasons why it should not go ahead with this legislation as currently formulated, when ironically the scope of the legislation and the apparent urgency with which it is being moved through the Legislature suggest that the government wants at all costs to avoid justifying its actions to the citizens and residents whom it will allegedly benefit. If this legislation is essentially benign, the government has certainly given the opposite impression in its choice of tactics.

Beyond the procedural issue, I have related concerns about the substantive provisions of Bill 103. First, the appointment of trustees, who, unelected, have the power to oversee and reverse the decisions of municipal governments, represents a direct contradiction of the will of the citizens. Second, the fact that Bill 103 says virtually nothing about what the new city's government structure will look like, instead providing for another entirely appointed transition team to flesh out all the details, is alarming to anyone who cares about democracy.

The fact that the citizens being affected by this legislation will have no input into, or recourse from, its decisions, shows utter contempt for the people who will live in the city of Metro Toronto. Further, Bill 103 will reduce the number of elected representatives from 106 to 44. This creates a ratio of one elected representative for every 50,000 residents.

If we combine this measure with the rearranging and downloading of services in the Metro area, and I don't think we should in any way believe that these two things are separate issues really, it means that although more services are being paid for out of property taxes, the citizens paying those taxes for services that affect them directly will have much less access to elected officials.

This represents a violation of the principle of no taxation without representation, and a betrayal by this government of the taxpayer, in whose interest it claims to act. Finally, this legislation creates a larger, more distant level of government, which will be less responsible to local citizens and yet have more power over their lives. This is a fundamental reversal of the idea that government close to the people is better government because it is more responsive and because it is more responsive to local needs.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that the main idea of my remarks has been that Bill 103 is a threat to the ability of citizens to responsibly govern themselves. Although municipalities are creatures of the provincial government by law, there is nothing that prevents the provincial government from acting in a way which respects the rights of local citizens to democratically govern themselves.

There are alternatives to this particular version of amalgamation, which seems intent, in the various ways I described above, on making it extremely hard for citizens to preserve the mechanisms of local democratic government. Small increases in efficiency are not worth the larger sacrifice of democratic government. I would like to appeal to the members of this committee, if you care about democracy, to vote with your conscience on the final reading of this piece of legislation.

**Mr Marchese:** Thank you, Mr Short, for taking the time to come today. You and many others who have preceded you feel very strongly about what is taking place and how that affects their local government, and they obviously have come with a great deal of passion to defend it, and you're one of them and I thank you for that.

How do you feel about the fact that this government — particularly Mr Harris, because it's really his decision and Mr Leach is simply the instrument of that agenda — has decided that Metro is incapable really of solving its own problems and that you really shouldn't have much of a say in that regard, and that you too probably by direct inference are incapable of coming to terms with some of the problems that we're facing? How do you respond to that?

**Mr Short:** I think, pretty obviously, that's consistent with the whole approach of the Harris government up to this point. They are behaving since they took office, and I should also add that nothing in their election platform suggested they were going to do anything like this, and everything they've done has suggested that they are the only people who have any real ability to make decisions. They're doing everything in the name of efficiency, and efficiency in this particular case means democracy can effectively fall by the wayside.

Unfortunately, we all know that the most effective form of government, the most efficient form of government is a dictatorship. However, in democratic societies such as ours we believe that it's reasonable to limit efficiency in certain cases and this is clearly one of them.

I would say to Mr Harris that he is very mistaken when he believes that he alone is able to make intelligent decisions about this, and I would even debate that he is making an intelligent decision because I think there is very little evidence in other reports supporting what he's doing except for the one he had specially commissioned.

**Mr Marchese:** How do you respond to the fact that Monsieur Leach says he has seen no evidence to convince him he's on the wrong course, yet every deputant comes forth with many ideas and they cite the very sources we cite to show that from an economic point of view there is no evidence to suggest they're going to solve anything or that there are any savings, and that the issue as it relates to values and what people value in their own communities is that there are great dangers, that they will affect those values they hold dear? How do you

respond to the fact that Leach says there's no evidence to convince him they're on the wrong course?

**Mr Short:** I think there's no evidence because Mr Leach doesn't want to see any evidence. There's plenty of evidence out there. If I can go beyond my prepared remarks I would say the agenda of this government is to download and privatize as much as possible, so they're pursuing a particular agenda here which will benefit certain segments of this society and hurt others very badly.

Unfortunately, it's quite cynical because when the real effects of this bill start to make themselves felt, when the downtown core of Toronto turns into cities like Chicago and Detroit with a lot of urban problems, this government probably will not be in power and will not be responsible at that time for any of the things that happen.

**Mr Marchese:** Another response to the whole issue of the referendum: You've heard that around Hamilton there are a number of communities that have recently voted against being amalgamated or subjugated by the city and that the vote there was quite high, in fact higher than most municipal election turnouts. It appears to me that Leach is going to disregard that. I've heard nothing from either Monsieur Leach or Harris saying, "We're going to respect that." We're worried about what they're going to do there and that they won't listen to the referendum here. How do you react to that?

**Mr Short:** I'm not surprised, for the reasons I've already stated. It makes me quite angry, although what this government has done since the day it was elected and the various measures it's put in place have shown absolute disregard for anything except its agenda, and yet it hasn't produced any evidence that it in fact has the answers it claims to have. They haven't created jobs. They haven't made living conditions better —

**The Chair:** Mr Short, you've gone beyond your allotted time. I'm sorry to interrupt but thank you for coming forward this evening and making your presentation.

#### TOM SMARDA

**The Chair:** Would Tom Smarda please come forward. Good evening, Mr Smarda and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Tom Smarda:** Greetings. I'm Tom Smarda. Thank you for your time here. I am a volunteer coordinator at Eastminster church, which provides an Out of the Cold program, which is an emergency shelter for the homeless.

Since the Mike Harris government has been in, helping to make our government more efficient, I guess there's no evidence of increased homelessness or increased poverty or increased people in sleeping bags on Yonge Street either if you happen to be driving a limo down by the Hummingbird Centre and checking out some of the exclusive art exhibits priced at \$4,000.

This is the Toronto city I love. This is the Toronto city I was born in. The Canada Life building was the biggest building in the city when I was born, so there have been a lot of rapid changes in the last few decades that people from far and wide have noticed, including the CN Tower, as we become a world-class city.

My question around some of this is, what does being a world-class city entail? Does it mean we need wall-to-

wall slums except for people who are living in exclusive neighbourhoods where there are walls and security systems? There's a booming business in security systems.

If that kind of world-class city is what Toronto is going to be touted to be, then maybe people need to carry a gun. I hope we don't have to go to those extremes because I certainly don't want to feel unsafe.

**1810**

However, I feel that governments have some responsibility in creating the conditions for people to be empowered themselves in order to prosper, and for people to feel empowered and to prosper entails a certain amount of democracy so that people have the freedom to do that.

One of the ethical things I see is that the Harris government is saying they are going to create an opportunity for people to make money without having the government then remove what it is they have produced, and that would come in the form of a tax break and that would create a greater prosperity and eventually Toronto would be better off.

Well, I feel also this would take away people's public input into certain things, such as if we have water privatized, so then situations like that would take away people's direct participation in circumstances that affect them. I feel the creation of this megacity is one step in disempowering people in order to start to privatize the resources in the city and the resources planet-wide by corporate control, where through free trade agreements and NAFTA, corporations are able to come in and start removing resources. So Canada becomes, and Toronto in a sense becomes, a little piece in the puzzle of a domination on the planet.

We cannot continue to have 20% of the world's population using 80% of the world's resources, logging off an area the size of England each year and continue to do this ad infinitum and expect growth, because we can't expect the rest of the Third World to develop, to become like us, a consumer society of that intensity producing garbage and at the same time call that equality.

It's just going to fall apart like a house of cards. What I feel is happening is that people in Toronto are starting to wake up to acting locally and thinking globally, seeing some of these paradigms of how we can exploit the earth and leave garbage and just continue to produce, using resources and producing garbage and calling that jobs, at the same time with people making profits and downsizing and laying people off.

Where are the jobs? In this efficient city that might be visualized, we might end up with one person pushes a button and everything gets done, and you're going to have the other 99.99% of the people unemployed. Where are they going to get their income from?

It becomes the interaction of people on a neighbourhood basis creating their services and support networks for each other in order to empower themselves so they can raise their children in a caring, safe environment, with an educational system that works, with clean air, clean water and jobs that facilitate creating that kind of environment.

If we're going to remove a basis, for instance, in the city of Toronto, where people can do that and they're not going to get government support and in fact are going to

be told that if they don't like it, they have no recourse through the courts of law — who voted that in? — all of a sudden it becomes this grab and I start to question, what kind of an agenda is going on here?

These are things that people are thinking about. I know there are volunteers who are captains at the Royal Bank Tower downtown and they volunteer at the Out of the Cold program. They come out and they help out to feed the hungry and to offer the homeless a warm place to stay.

This situation is across the board. I know that people in Ontario are sick and tired of paying taxes for programs that don't work. Great. I agree with that too. We all agree with that. So how are we going to implement that? And if we're going to talk about special interest groups, what is the agenda of those 300 people on the planet who have more than a billion dollars of their own resources in terms of cash? And when we're looking at transnational companies that are larger than most nation states on the planet, that is a lot of power.

That is a lot of power concentrated in the media. That is a lot of power that if I want to build a megaproject worth \$900 million, I can blow a measly \$3 million or \$4 million on lawyers' fees to make it a bit more legal and it's a tax write-off, a cost of business — \$2 million or \$3 million out of \$900 million is less than 1%. That's peanuts. But \$3 million put into a law firm to lobby a government is an immense amount of power being put legally to obtain a result.

For people who are scrambling, who are now being cut off social assistance or losing in a 20% cut, so women with children are finding they're no longer feeding their kids but going to food banks, and now they're needing to spend their money on rent as a result of the cutbacks, how can they organize to have power, to have a say in their life?

This is the problem, because when people are at that point of desperation, hungry, and companies are laying off people so you have unemployment, you're going to have anger, you're going to have crime, you're going to have cutbacks to education. You can be building more prisons. Is this the type of agenda the people of Ontario have voted for? And if they say no, they are going to be disregarded. The referendum is nice but we have no evidence that amalgamation won't work. Like the speaker before me said, when it's implemented and things fall in, maybe the Harris government won't be here to be responsible for that and how are we going to put it back together again?

These are valid questions that need to be looked at. I know there are little bits and hints of it in the mainstream papers, but it doesn't seem to come together, to all gel. I really am glad that what the Mike Harris government is doing is at least building structures for community people to take a look, "Hey, this is really happening." Now they're talking to their neighbours. Now they're going out to rallies. Now they're becoming involved. Now they're starting to say: "Participatory democracy is something that's important to me. It doesn't mean just sitting at home and watching TV."

**The Chair:** Mr Smarda, we are coming to the end of your time. I wonder if you could wrap up.

**Mr Smarda:** Okay. So those are the kinds of things I find important, that are opportunities for growth in the true sense of community building. Like I once heard, if you're entertaining and you're wrong, people will forgive you, but if you're right and you bore people, they never will.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Smarda, for coming forward this evening. We're in recess until 7 pm.

*The committee recessed from 1818 to 1903.*

### ROGER GREENWALD

**The Chair:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Would Roger Greenwald please come forward. Good evening, Mr Greenwald, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Roger Greenwald:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I will divide my presentation into three parts. The first is a statement.

I have lived in the city of Toronto for almost 30 years. About eight years ago I managed to buy a house. I pay taxes; I am a citizen; I vote; from time to time I write to my elected representatives at Toronto city council, in this Legislative Assembly or in Parliament. I have never written a letter to any member of Metro council. On a few occasions I have attended meetings in my neighbourhood, and I have been glad to see my city councillor at those meetings, even when I disagreed with him.

I am here to urge you to let this bill die in committee or to table it so that the people of Metro Toronto and their elected representatives in municipalities, in Metro council, and in the Legislative Assembly can work together to find acceptable solutions to whatever problems can be shown to afflict our present system. These must be the real problems, not ostensible ones, and the solutions must take into account the diverse population of this urban region and must have the consent of those whose governing structures are to be changed.

The issue of democracy is for me the single most important one in this debate. I want those who make decisions about the fabric of my and my neighbours' everyday life to be accessible and accountable. I and every person I know care very deeply about the ability of our community to make its own choices about maintaining its artistic life as well as its libraries, its museums, its parks, and all the other facilities that are the oxygen that keeps this city alive. Democracy on the local level is the lifeblood that carries that oxygen. Bill 103 would strip this city and the five others in Metro of the ability to make those choices. It would drain the lifeblood of local democracy from this region, and oxygen starvation would not take long to set in. I guess that's one way to turn this city blue, but it's not a way that will benefit anyone.

The government of Ontario maintains a site on the World Wide Web in order to inform the citizens of this province. Among the very first statements at that site are the following:

"Our parliamentary system of responsible government is based largely on Great Britain's. At its root is the principle that no government can rule without the consent of the people. That principle has a long and honourable history, dating back nearly 800 years."

Bill 103 does not respect that basic principle and is not honourable. The bill's provisions may be legal, but they

are not democratic. As Professor Peter Russell explained to this committee more ably than I can, much of our democracy resides in traditions that are not embodied in written laws, and this bill violates those traditions. It is not based on full, open, informed, rational debate; it does not seek to take account of the views of diverse groups; and, above all, it does not seek the consent of the governed.

Choose almost any aspect of Bill 103. Take the appointed trustees and transition officials who are to control the budgets of elected bodies and whose actions are to be above the law, not subject to review by the courts. Take the single 44-member council that is to govern 2.3 million people, as if that were just as good as having six councils of even as few as eight members each to govern areas of manageable size and distinct identities. Take the neighbourhood committees, which may or may not be elected — the bill doesn't say — but which will in any case have no power to tax or spend, only to advise.

In these and many other aspects of the bill, the overarching question is, who is the Minister of Municipal Affairs to dictate our form of government? I know that sounds like a rhetorical question, but I think it is worth answering. Only one who regards himself as a master ventures to appoint underlings to rule over subjects. Minister Leach seems to have forgotten what the term "public servant" means, or even that it exists — both the "servant" word and the "public" word, which refers to the whole public. Trickle-down economics, for all its counter-productivity and destructiveness, is still some sort of economics. Trickle-down democracy is no democracy at all; rights granted as favours are not rights.

When I received the clerk's response to my request to speak here, I discovered that the assembly has a heraldic device that appears on its letterhead, and that the device includes a motto. It says "Audi alteram partem." That means "Hear the other side," and not only hear, because "audi" means listen to, learn from, heed. This is the motto of democracy. The other side does not mean only the opposition parties; it means all those who hold different views, even if they are a minority. Democracies do not trample the rights of minorities; if they do so, they are not democracies in our modern sense.

This government must not enact legislation that destroys democratic institutions. Bill 103 does that. In closing my statement, I would like to remind you that your votes on this bill will be a matter of public record and of history. The black mark of a vote in favour of Bill 103 can never be rubbed out. If you vote for this bill, that vote will follow you for the rest of your careers and the rest of your lives.

Stop and reflect on recent revelations in Quebec that have forced certain officials to resign their posts. Why did they have to resign? They committed no crimes; they did nothing that was, strictly speaking, illegal. What they did was to attend rallies and support causes that were, to put it very politely, anti-democratic, and that has come back to haunt them, as this bill will come back to haunt you if you vote in favour of it.

**1910**

The second part of my presentation consists of three questions I've derived from these hearings, with my answers.

Question: Why do you think the government is doing this?

Answer: This seems to call for speculation about motives, but what I think it is really asking for is an analysis that might help citizens, and also Tory members of the assembly, to understand what on earth the government is up to, if indeed this bill has any rational underpinnings at all. One could ask many well-known questions — starting with "Who benefits?" — and arrive at useful answers, but not in a few minutes. So I would like simply to state a description rather than an analysis.

What this bill does, as William Archer has pointed out, is to remove opposition. It does not do so by jailing opponents or by nullifying the results of elections but by wiping out the electoral structure that permitted the election of people opposed to some of this government's policies. Removal of the opposition is not what is supposed to happen in this democracy, except by choice of the voters.

Question: How might we amend this bill to make it better?

Answer: To echo Professor Russell, that cannot be done, because the bill is wrong in its essence in that it does not seek the consent of the governed. To put it more graphically, if I am about to drop a 10-ton boulder on your house, I don't think you are going to be impressed by an offer from me to chip off a ton or two so that I will be dropping only an eight-ton boulder on your house.

A last question, one I have not heard posed but have read in some places: Why are so many citizens denouncing me, calling me nasty names, comparing me to odious historical figures and so on, just because they disagree with the policies I favour? And how can they do that when in private life I am really a rather nice and reasonable person?

Answer: Your public functions and your private lives are separate items to everyone but you, inside whom the two meet. You will be denounced if what you do as legislators is reprehensible, even if no one doubts you are kind to dogs and children. Bill 103 is reprehensible not because it happens to pursue a policy different from that of your opponents, but because it is fundamentally and profoundly destructive of democracy.

The third and final part of my presentation consists of two recommendations:

(1) I urge this committee to conclude that Bill 103 is wrong, I urge you to admit that it is wrong and I urge you to kill this bill. Withdraw it, table it, vote against it, and if necessary, drive a wooden stake through its heart, but kill it so that democratic processes may determine how the Toronto urban area can best be governed and so that democratic institutions may be preserved.

(2) I suggest to the Progressive Conservative members of this committee, in all seriousness, that in view of the acute embarrassment he is causing you, it would be appropriate for you to ask Minister Leach to resign his portfolio. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Greenwald. You've used up your allotted time, but I want to thank you for coming forward before the committee tonight.

## JACK LAYTON

**The Chair:** Would Jack Layton please come forward. Good evening, Mr Layton, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jack Layton:** Thank you very much, Mr Chairman, and members of the committee. It's good to be here. Thank you for holding these hearings.

My background is as a professor of urban government in our various universities around the city for the last 25 years or so, so I've had a chance to read pretty well every book that has ever been written on this topic and made submissions to the Robarts commission way back when; so there's a bit of a history there. I've been a member of city and/or Metro council since 1982 and spent a little bit of time, after the voters relegated me to second spot when I ran for mayor, in the business world.

When I came back to Metro council this last time, I ran on the proposition that my job should be abolished, Metro council should be abolished and it should be replaced with a GTA council with either indirectly selected or double-directly selected representation from the area municipalities. I still think this is the best system. I had a chance to work with your Minister of Municipal Affairs when he ran the TTC, during a period when we had double-direct election in the city, and in conversation we both agreed it was an excellent arrangement, perhaps the best. I want to turn to just a little background as to why I'm here and why I think hearings are very important.

My dad, as some of you may know, was a chair of Brian Mulroney's caucus and was the Minister of Mines in that government. They proposed at one time that radioactive waste should be disposed of near a certain community, and it was his job to go out and hear the community on that. He said to me: "We thought we were right. We had done the engineering, we'd figured it out. We thought we were right and we were intent on going ahead. We thought we'd sort of take it on the chin and that would be the end of it." And he had a big chin, not unlike his leader. In any event, by the end of the hearings they actually decided to withdraw and look somewhere else because enough reasoned arguments were put in front of them, of a wide variety of kinds, that they thought they'd better take a second look.

I think that's good advice. Even though you may start sometimes with a really clear intention of where you want to go, hearings can make a difference, and that's why the public is down here, not just to fill up time. It's certainly why I'm here, in the hope that our arguments might persuade you that a change of course is the appropriate thing. I'm not going to repeat the incredibly eloquent testimony, much of which I agree with, that you've heard already. I'm just going to focus on two things.

First of all, it would be a big mistake, in my view, to create instability, insecurity, confusion and uncertainty in the governance of our largest city. It's absolutely critical that whatever we do is seen by the world, by the investment community and by our residents as being reasonable, carefully thought out and moving forward in a fashion that doesn't make anybody particularly nervous; in other words, an ordered process of change. I don't

believe that is what's happening under Bill 103 and I've prepared a list of some of the aspects that are really quite fundamentally unsettling and create deep levels of insecurity.

The first one is that we are eliminating seven governments that we know work reasonably well but just about everybody feels could be fine-tuned, could be adjusted, and perhaps that ought to happen. We've had many good studies that point in certain directions, none of which directions have been adopted by the current bill though. What we have is a series of governments being eliminated but we don't know what's going to replace them. If I could just refer you to this list, if you've got it. I'm sorry for the quality of the Xeroxing on our Metro machine down there. C'est la vie today.

The municipal structure is not spelled out. This is a government which is going to take office in about 10 months and the structure of that government is not known. The departments and their responsibilities are not spelled out. These are really basic items. I were investing in a community or judging its stability, I would certainly want to know that there was a plan.

Dozens of well-functioning agencies and boards are being abolished or put into limbo and no replacements are being established in the bill. We're told what's being taken away but we're not told what's replacing it, and I see this as a big problem. In fact, I don't believe it has ever happened in Canadian municipal history before that when a major restructuring has happened without spelling out what the new structure is. I think it's a serious problem. Instead what's proposed is a transition team which will determine all of these elements, and I don't see that as a wise course of action, particularly because that team will not be making recommendations that come back to an elected body like yourselves or to a council in many, many cases.

We don't know how the various bylaws are going to be knitted together to form a cohesive legislative framework. That's a serious foundation of government that will be missing. There's no specification of the department structure. The heads of the departments aren't known at this time and they'll be appointed by somebody that we don't even know yet.

We don't know whether there will be provincially imposed spending limits or taxation policies on municipal government. That power is given to the minister and to the transition team in the bill, but we don't know if it's going to be exercised. So in a sense we don't know who's going to be making the financial decisions that are going to stick, and this is a very confusing and quite unprecedented situation.

Bond rating agencies do not know the impacts of the downloading that's going on, or the reorganization. There's so much debate about whether it's going to have this effect or that effect, and I think there's a growing consensus about the nature of those effects and they're very disturbing.

A new property tax assessment is coming in at the same time, the impact of which on certain businesses or on areas of business is not known. So there's another fundamental of urban governance that's now been surrounded with question marks.

## 1920

Community councils are not mentioned in the bill. In the rationale, they're offered as the prime linkage, or one of them, between the people and the new government and the way we can maintain the terrific community involvement and decision-making that we've had in Toronto and that many people from around the world have come and studied, yet they're not provided for in the legislation.

Neighbourhood councils are mentioned but that's all that happens; they're just mentioned.

The elected positions are not defined. Even at this date we don't know what positions are going to be available for election to the new council. If you put yourselves in that position and imagine that happening to you, I think you can see why that would cause a lot of problems. The boundaries aren't drawn yet and they're not going to be drawn by an arm's-length process, which is another fundamental of democracy.

The process and timing of municipal budgets and striking the mill rates aren't determined. We're going to adopt our budget and mill rate in two weeks, like a responsible urban government should. So have all the other area municipal councils. But our solicitor is telling us that because of Bill 103, our budget and mill rate can't come into force until the trustees have reviewed them. They won't be appointed until April. They've got a \$5-billion budget to study, and I know they're conscientious people. It will take them a minimum of a month, probably a little more. So our mill rate won't be struck until later in May. That means investors don't know the lay of the land. We've worked hard to bring our mill rate setting right back to the earliest point in the year we could, and that's now all thrown into jeopardy.

I suggest it's not good government. You should exempt our budgets, which are now reasonably well known to all of you, because they're in their final approval stage. You should exempt those from the board of trustees, otherwise it's hard for people to really accept what's going on.

My second area of concern is that the bill is really an unprecedented assault on local democracy. I know that sounds like harsh words, but I've listed six basic principles of democracy that are violated in this bill.

(1) No taxation should ever be permitted without representation, yet the board of trustees and the transition team can set the tax rates and approve or not approve the budgets. They can unilaterally cut or increase spending. In fact, one part of spending they will be increasing is their own costs, which we don't even yet know. We're trying to set our budget, and I hope you'd ask your minister somehow for us to get at least an estimate to put in our budget so we'll know what to put aside for these bodies that are being created over which we have no authority and over which the voters have absolutely no say.

Probably the most fundamental principle in the modern democratic world is taxation and representation, and their connection. It's being violated for probably a two-year period, effectively affecting \$10 billion worth of budgets over two years that will be decided upon by people who are not elected — the transition team — and who are not subject to the approval of the minister. It could be, but it doesn't have to be. I think it's a very serious problem.

(2) The salaries of public officials should be set by those who can be held accountable. The trustees, and in

particular the transition team, are given the power to set their own salaries. This is outrageous. This is just simply wrong. At least those people or those who appoint them have to be somehow subjected to some sort of account. I don't think you want to turn over that responsibility to the trustees.

It's typical of the way the bill has been constructed, frankly. It's as though it were written by a consultant to a private firm or something who isn't in the public sector. We have different rules in the public sector and they're really basic.

(3) Public employees should be hired by elected officials, because the elected officials will be held accountable for their actions. Suppose I'm a member of the new council and the commissioner of whatever department does something outrageous, makes an outrageous decision. I'll be held accountable by the voters for that commissioner's actions, you can count on that, yet he's being appointed by a transition team that's never accountable to the public, ever; walks away from it at the end of the job. That's really not an acceptable arrangement. I don't think you would accept it in any of your agencies and boards, and I don't think you should put it in place here. You could say, "Well, you could fire that commissioner," but there may even be some restrictions on that. Besides, it's not good government to set up that kind of framework. The new council should hire the commissioners, and it's typical of the philosophy of the bill that that's violated.

(4) There are just three more violations I'd like to mention of the basic democratic officials. Officials, including appointed officials, should never be placed above the law. This is violated in sections 12, 13 and 16(4)(d) of your bill. It's not right to place elected or appointed officials above the law, and this is simply being done here. The only protection anyone should ever have is that, as a legislator in the Legislature during debate, certain protections are there, but I don't believe we should exempt people from the law.

(5) Government business should be conducted in public. The transition team and the board of trustees are not directed to hold their business in public. Indeed, the trustees are told to conduct their business in private. After we've had hundreds of hours of public submissions on our budget, for example, they're going to sit in a room without anybody who was involved in that budget-setting present and without the eyes of the public watching them make their decision and decide whether to cut a couple of hundred million more dollars out of our municipal budget. This is completely unacceptable.

You would never allow such a thing in your Legislature. Your estimates are debated in public, defended in public. There are hearings around them in public and the media watches every step of the way. But you're setting up a process here which will put the entire budget process of seven major councils into secret. I can't believe the members of this committee would accept such a proposition.

**The Chair:** Mr Layton, you are nearing the end of your time.

**Mr Layton:** Very good. I just have one last comment, which is that public access and input are a basic principle of democracy. You've accepted it to the extent of having

these hearings, and we appreciate that. That means when the trustees deal with our budget, they should have to do so in the same way we did and hear from the public we heard from who helped us shape our decision-making. They helped us decide what to cut and what not to cut. The trustees were not there. They haven't been appointed. They haven't heard those arguments. You should put them there. You should insist they have hearings on our \$5 billion worth of budgets. Frankly, that would begin to get absurd. We've just done all that, and I think you should tell the trustees to move on to other things.

In summary, there are fundamental uncertainties created in this legislation and I've listed about 13 of them which I think are going to damage our community. Second, there are basic principles of democracy that are violated that have to be addressed. I believe this particular bill should be withdrawn and a process of developing a reform of urban governance should be developed that matches these kinds of criteria and others. Thank you very much.

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and The Islands):** On a point of order, Mr Chair: I would request unanimous consent that each caucus could ask the presenter a question.

**The Chair:** We've got very specific agreements from the subcommittee and the committee about groups which get extra time — mayors get extra time — and I'm loath to —

**Mr Gerretsen:** Well, this gentleman is involved —

**The Chair:** I understand that, Mr Gerretsen. You can say that about a lot of people who have appeared and will appear before the committee.

**Mr Gerretsen:** I realize that.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Chairman, on a point of order: I think the presenter has raised some critical points about the budgets of the six local governments and Metro government that are going to be impacting on people in the next couple of weeks. There's a definite problem here because of the approval and the time frame for setting mill rates.

**The Chair:** This really isn't a point of order.

**Mr Colle:** But I think we should have a report from the ministry on this. We're talking about a \$7-billion budget here that's got a serious flaw if you fold it into this act. I would like a report on Mr Layton's questions in terms of how this can affect those budgets. Could we bring that forward?

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** Mr Chairman, I have no objection to bringing forward information for the opposition to deal with the issue that was brought up by Mr Layton, but I don't believe this is a point of order or that that information is required for the committee's deliberation on this document. I recognize it needs to be answered and it should be done to alleviate the concerns, but it has no bearing on the hearings we're having here.

**The Chair:** You would like me to ask research to —

**Mr Colle:** I'd like research, in conjunction with ministry officials, to just answer some of those significant questions in terms of the impact on the budgets of the seven governments. This is part of why we're deliberating on this bill, whether this bill works or not. I think the presenter has demonstrated there's a major flaw in this bill in that it basically circumvents the budgetary process of the government. So we need some information.

**The Chair:** We're now getting into debating the bill, and I'm not —

**Mr Gerretsen:** Mr Chairman, on a further point of order: It is absolutely essential that the new council that takes over, which undoubtedly it will, will have to know how to go into its budgeting process.

**The Chair:** That's not a point of order. Mr Layton, we're way behind. That's all the time we have for you. I want to thank you for coming before the committee this evening.

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### ERIC FAWCETT

**The Chair:** Would Eric Fawcett please come forward. Good evening, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Eric Fawcett:** My name is Eric Fawcett. I'm a retired professor of physics at the University of Toronto. I'd like to thank the committee for giving me this opportunity to speak to them about Bill 103.

I was born and educated in England, a scholarship boy at Cambridge University, and after a few years of employment as a government research scientist in the UK, I went to Bell Telephone labs in New Jersey. I lived in New Jersey for 10 years, so I know what that government is all about.

I know also what happens to a city after many years of bad government. I was there when Newark, New Jersey, went up in flames in the race riots in 1968. When I came to Toronto in 1970 and became a Canadian citizen, the city was in the throes of the campaign to stop the Spadina expressway. Common sense prevailed in that dispute, as well as in the dispute raging then about ward boundaries that resulted in the present political structure of the city.

The fundamental point raised at that time by citizens at hearings like this was that the long, so-called strip wards lumped people with very diverse interests together in electoral groups and thus prevented effective representation. The Ontario Municipal Board decided that the compact block wards that the citizens were urging would provide a better opportunity for effective democracy.

That decision should be recalled today when Bill 103 proposes to change electoral boundaries drastically to create 44 wards out of 22 federal ridings. These ridings were devised for effective representation at the federal level. They're quite unsatisfactory and would seriously weaken local democracy.

It's been possible for people to involve themselves in determining the city's future because the urban political structure that exists today makes politicians responsive to the importunities of noisy voters, and because politicians think it wise to listen, city civil servants respond to direction by following suit.

Much that is still good about Toronto and makes it one of the few really livable cities in the world is a result of the close interaction between residents and officials over the past 25 years. From a position of confrontation and argument in the 1960s, the relationship between officialdom and citizenry shifted to one of a remarkable degree of cooperation, in which inevitable disagreements were very often resolved with satisfaction.

Many members of the U of T community have been involved in creating the Toronto of today, both in matters that pertain directly to the university and those affecting the city as a whole. The success of this interaction is one of the reasons so many Torontonians oppose the current amalgamation proposal.

The changes likely to occur as a result of amalgamation will not only prejudice the lives of U of T people as citizens, but will affect the university as an institution. Such enterprises as the renovations on St George Street, carried out with speed, efficiency and amity, will be very difficult to move so smoothly through a planning and development staff which also deals with North York, Scarborough and Etobicoke issues.

But there are broader issues facing the university as well. We all know that Toronto is an expensive city in which to live, but even so, many academic staff members can afford housing in the streets immediately to the west of the university complex. The preservation of neighbourhoods, a high priority accepted by the city, has made this possible. These reasonable housing costs and absence of commuting relate to salary costs. What does it cost to live in the suburbs of New York City and teach at Columbia? How would an amalgamated city deal with neighbourhood and street issues?

It's not only faculty housing that makes the preservation of a vigorous downtown core so important to the university, because students depend on a public transportation network that's only economically viable when there's a heavy use of the components of the system. The rapidly increasing interaction between the business community and the university works well in a dense, alive urban environment.

There's no guarantee that the twin roses of the University of Toronto and Queen's Park will ensure that the urban air around us will forever remain sweet-smelling. Just go and look at the streets near the University of Chicago — you'd better be careful, though — or near the US Congress. Many people fear the impending amalgamation will tip the balance to militate against the survival of the downtown core as a viable, productive urban environment.

When the political interests of 2.3 million amalgamated people must be considered by 44 politicians, and the city officials must answer to a blending of needs of communities stretching from Pickering to Mississauga, how will the peculiar but vital needs of the core be respected?

There is, however, much more than the defence of our physical environment that should call University of Toronto faculty and students to the lists against the legislation as proposed. We have been told, and I suppose it's true, that cities are mere creatures of the province. They have no institutional or constitutional rights in themselves and they are totally subject to the will of the Legislature.

All that is true of universities as well. If the major city of the province can be arbitrarily treated, so can every municipality or university. That the legislation is arbitrary can hardly be denied. At no time in the history of the province have governments dealt with municipalities in the manner set forth in this act.

Whatever defenders of the legislation may say, the words of the text, which have been quoted already but

I'll say them again, some of them, are very clear. For the year 1997, appointed trustees and a transition team have complete control over budgeting, hiring, month-by-month expenditures and — I can hardly believe this — "decisions of the board are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court of law."

These trustees are not in place merely to guard against irrational and perverse actions by disgruntled politicians; the legislation says they "shall monitor the actions of the old councils and their local boards, to ensure compliance with this act...review 1997 operating capital budgets under section 11, and amend and approve them when the board considers it appropriate...establish and publish guidelines with respect to appointments, hiring and promotion."

The old council "shall not...appoint a person to a position, hire a new employee, or promote an existing employee" unless it is done with prior approval of the board.

Jack Layton spoke with more authority than I on the ways in which this legislation violates fundamental democratic principles, but I was born before him — that was in 1927 — so I'm not quite old enough to say that I remember the election in 1933 of Adolf Hitler to Chancellor of Germany, but I do remember my father's horror at the destruction of democracy that the National Socialists wrought. They called them gauleiters then, not commissioners. The latter is more in the flavour of George Orwell's 1984 Newspeak.

Mike Harris's Common Sense Revolution has some terrible antecedents. But the overturning of democracy in Germany and Italy and other countries happened in a continent still reeling from the Great War of 1914-18, from hyperinflation, massive unemployment and in the throes of the Great Depression. God only knows why Premier Harris would introduce this neo-Fascist legislation in the province of Ontario in 1997.

I should like to endorse the recommendations of my predecessor this evening, Roger Greenwald. He spelled them out more eloquently than I can. First, withdraw your personal support, members of this committee, from this Bill 103. Those of you who are Tory MPPs, make known to your party leaders the advisability of asking Minister Leach to resign forthwith.

**Mrs Munro:** Thank you very much for appearing here. When I look at the comments you have given us here, it seems that most of your comments are directed towards criticism of the process.

**Mr Fawcett:** Yes.

**Mrs Munro:** I'm just wondering if you could comment for us on the issue of your support for, for instance, the maintenance of the status quo. Do you see a need to move in some direction different from the present municipal structure we have?

**Mr Fawcett:** It's a difficult question for me because I'm busy with many other things and I don't pay an awful lot of attention to how the city works. I'm very concerned about how democracy works. It's quite clear that we need to change things. Metro wasn't working. We need to change things with a democratic process, with due consultation and so on. So we need to change, but we shouldn't change in this manner.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

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JULIA ALDUS

**The Chair:** Would Julia Aldus please come forward. Good evening. You have 10 minutes this evening to make your presentation. If there's some time remaining, I'll ask the Liberal caucus to ask questions.

**Ms Julia Aldus:** That's fine. Actually, it'll probably be shorter than the last one, so you can catch up on your time.

I would like to start off by saying that I'm not a political person, but I have never in my life been so outraged or moved to political action as I have been by the issue of amalgamation and the way it's being attempted to be brought about in this city and in this province.

Our current local elected politicians are approachable and they're available. They listen and they have the power to make changes. They understand the important community issues that make a neighbourhood what it is because they are part of the community. Our various communities and neighbourhoods are what make this city a very great city and what make the city, I think, a place where everybody wants to live, the people who are downtowners.

Losing local representation means losing a community and neighbourhood voice. It seems to be the last level, the last voice that we have, particularly since Mr Harris doesn't seem to want to listen to too many people. I think once the boundaries are increased and the ratio of voters to elected official increases, this voice is lost forever.

The neighbourhood is everything. Every city and every municipality has its own concerns. It has its own issues, and rightly so. Every area is slightly different. North York and Don Mills don't really care about the hookers on my street in Cabbagetown, and I in turn don't really care about strip joints in Etobicoke. But all of these issues are very important to individuals if you happen to live in those communities.

I think if you take all these issues from the existing municipalities and put them under one roof and one bureaucracy, no one is really going to get looked after efficiently. I think it's the Metro level that has to go, not the local level where we can still make something happen in our communities and our neighbourhoods.

This government wasn't elected on a platform to remove elected officials at the municipal level, nor was it elected on a platform of creating a megacity by amalgamation. Everything we have learned from the disasters of American cities seems to be ignored: empty, forgotten downtown city cores, incredible violence, cores that empty at 5 o'clock, places that are only fit for very rich and very poor people and the homeless.

The downloading of social welfare to the lowest level of government that can't possibly support the cost is a deliberate move to phase out social welfare altogether. In a city where huge numbers of people have a real need for assistance, where the only revenue is property taxes, property taxes are going to have to go up. Funding a small and meaningless tax cut to individuals benefits no one, but in the larger picture it costs the government huge

dollars and must be funded somehow. You know, we're not stupid.

Lastly, what I'm witnessing and what I find most frightening are the dangerous attitudes and policies that seem to be governed by simplistic and narrow thinking. They're blatantly undemocratic and, I think, astoundingly un-Canadian. To remove elected officials and to give power to appointed ones, to refuse to listen to public wishes, to deliberately attempt to confuse the public with an overload of changes so no one can possibly clearly understand what is really happening until it's too late, the consequences too enormous, is blatantly underhanded.

No one questions that change is needed, but government must be responsible and change must happen with thought, intelligence and research, not by political whim. It has to happen by our history of democratic process, which means that the debating and the amending process, issue by issue, not everything all at once, must be taken into consideration.

I think it's really quite funny how Mr Harris seemed to be very quick in defending his own community when it's been threatened recently by the feds. Maybe it will give him a little insight into what it's like to live in the downtown core of Toronto and be threatened by his very undemocratic provincial policies.

**Mr Gerretsen:** I would just like to pick up on your sense and notion of neighbourhood. It's certainly a concept I've felt very strongly about for the last 20 years or so, because it's basically the neighbourhoods that shape our individual lives, to a large extent, outside of our working environments, I suppose.

What this government is really saying is that if we just got rid of two thirds of the politicians, whether it's in Metro Toronto or whether it's outside of Toronto, we'd all be better off, we'd all be cheaper off. I think a lot of us feel the fact that a politician is no further away than the next concession line or two or three blocks down the street etc and that you can have some direct contact with them is very important. I wonder if you could just address that issue as to what would happen in a Metro Toronto that in effect would get rid of two thirds of its local and Metro politicians.

**Ms Aldus:** If you lose the local person we have right now who you can approach — I live in Cabbagetown and it's always had, I think, a very good history of local politicians who have always been very approachable and where changes can happen. When there's going to be this bigger picture, I think we're going to essentially be forgotten. Particularly in the areas where — I don't live in a wealthy neighbourhood; I live in a lovely renovated area, but I'm right next to Moss Park. As I mentioned in my speech, if it happens to be a representative who also looks after Don Mills or North York, they are not going to be concerned what happens on my tiny little street in the downtown core. That's what we're going to lose. That's where I live, that's where I go home every night, that's my house and it has been my house for 10, 15 years. That's going to be gone. I hate to think what will happen. We'll get the American picture.

**Mr Sergio:** Just quickly, thanks for coming down to make your presentation to our committee, first of all. On February 3, I believe, Mr Leach came down and, address-

ing our committee he said, among many other things: "There are a great many people who wish to speak to one Toronto, and we want to hear as many as possible."

Other than perhaps a handful of people who have already made submissions to us, most of them are from the actual city of Toronto. We have been trying to have the committee hear the people in Etobicoke, in North York, in Scarborough and so forth. Do you think that democracy is being shortchanged here when we have a minister who says we'd like to hear from as many people as possible and the people who are being affected are not given the opportunity to be heard?

**Ms Aldus:** I can't speak for someone who isn't in the downtown core. Maybe the information isn't getting out to them. I am not sure I can —

**Mr Sergio:** But do you think the committee should have gone to Scarborough city hall, let's say, to get closer to the people, or to Etobicoke?

**Ms Aldus:** Oh, absolutely, yes. I think we have more to lose in the downtown core than the other communities. We stand to face far more changes in the downtown core than a lot of the other areas.

**Mr Sergio:** I come from the Islington and Steeles area. That's quite a bit away. It's very difficult for working people in that area to come down to Queen's Park and be heard by this committee. I think this would have been an issue big enough, important enough.

**Mr Aldus:** It's also very scary. It's very intimidating to sit in front of this many people and say what you think when it's not what do you do for a living.

**Mr Sergio:** Important enough to have a binding referendum on it?

**Ms Aldus:** I believe so. I would say the majority of people I speak to and work with on a daily basis, and I've talked to them about coming to speak as well, are simply too frightened. It takes a bold person, I think, to have the nerve, and I have been touched so much by this that it has given me the courage to be able to do this. As I say, normally I would not be able to, but it has touched me that deeply and has disturbed me that much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Aldus, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

#### JOHN WELLNER

**The Chair:** Would John Wellner please come forward. Good evening, Mr Wellner. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr John Wellner:** Good evening. It's a pleasure to have this opportunity to speak before you this evening. My name is John Wellner. I work with the Toronto Environmental Alliance. We're a local non-profit citizens' group that works on issues concerning the urban environment. In most cases these environmental concerns relate directly to the health of citizens of the Toronto region.

I think it's appropriate in this short presentation to use a visual aid to focus attention on what Toronto is likely to look like once megafied. Although I'm here to speak to Bill 103, I think it's important to be aware of other influences connected to the amalgamation bill that will have a profound and long-lasting effect on our city and what it's going to look like in the future. The transfer of financial responsibility for social services, public transit

and the actual value assessment property tax will combine with Bill 103 to wreak havoc in the Toronto region.

I believe that a suburban strip mall influence is winning out here and I'd like to add a little visual representation, if I may. The GTA, the economic engine of the province, the land of opportunity, the apple of Canada's eye, is slowly but surely being turned into a big doughnut. We're not talking about a Dutchie here, or a Boston cream or a cruller. We're talking about an old-fashioned doughnut with a big hole in the middle of it.

"Why a doughnut?" you ask. I'd like to answer that, if I may. Increased tax pressure on homeowners and subsequently renters in much of Metro, but definitely in Toronto, will drive people into the suburbs. All the progressive mixed-use development that is being promoted by the Toronto city hall will be for naught because of the increased property tax burden.

What will happen next is much like what has happened in many cities in the United States: reduced services, increased crime, higher taxes etc equal exodus. As Ross Perot once said, and I'll quote him here, "I hear a giant sucking sound," but this time it's the sound of homeowners and businesses moving to the suburbs. Exodus equals an even smaller tax base, more pressure on social services, the police etc, which means more crime, urban decay etc.

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Why is an environmentalist interested in this doughnut-making exercise? Remember that urban environmental concerns are essentially health concerns; that is to say, concerns for the health of the citizens of the Toronto region, both those who decide to move to the suburbs and those who decide to stay. Over the past year we at the Toronto Environmental Alliance have been doing our part to improve the air quality of the region. As you have probably heard, Metro Toronto is the smog capital of Canada. You've probably also heard that on average between one and three people die prematurely every day because of smog.

The problem is not just the occasional hot, humid August day when the air quality reaches such extremes that an official warning has to be issued. The problem of deteriorating air quality is with us all the time. I have participated in the Ministry of Environment and Energy's smog plan, presently under way, a partnership of public and private concerns and a few environmental non-profits like us. I am privy to what the ministry believes to be the primary causes of smog and the solutions they have found to the problem.

There are two keys to our worsening air quality problem that this bill and subsequent legislation go directly against: One is urban sprawl, hence the outside of the doughnut analogy; the second is public transportation, which is being downloaded to the megacity. They are both very directly connected to the car and the way we use it.

Some 50% of people living in downtown Toronto don't even own a car. They rely on other modes of transportation to get around, the TTC for example. With urban sprawl, a city that goes on and on forever, those who choose to live further out need a car and use it more than those who live in mixed-use urban centre develop-

ments. Endless subdivisions, the great expanse between home, the workplace and even shopping facilities make the car essential.

The TTC is the most efficient urban mass transit system in North America for one reason alone: Between 75% and 80% of the budget comes from the fare box. That is, you and I, the users, pay for it. This is not the case in other urban centres in North America, or for that matter in the regions around Toronto. Regional transit in the GTA — I think there are 14 different regional transit authorities — is only able to raise about 50%, on average, from the fare box, requiring much larger government subsidies. This will now be the responsibility of these regional municipalities. They will only be able to afford the most lucrative routes and will cancel the lesser ones. Ridership will decline.

In Metro the same decrease in services is imminent. The hole in the doughnut will mean fewer riders and fewer businesses in the core of the city, hence more need for the car. Remember, the car is the single largest source of the emissions that make up smog; they're called smog precursors. Even without megacity, it is projected that the number of cars in the GTA will grow by more than a million by the year 2010; that's from 2.4 million now to 3.5 million in 2010. Car populations are growing faster than human populations. Bill 103 will make the problem considerably worse. As Toronto empties and the hole in the doughnut gets bigger, the distances these million more cars will travel will increase. More kilometres equal more pollution.

I urge the government and the opposition parties to further examine the environmental impacts of Bill 103 and its accompanying legislation.

If I may use another image to help along with this, urban sprawl and the decrease in transit services are going to make the GTA look like a doughnut with a cigarette burning in the middle of it. Please pay attention to the air we all breathe and the other environmental implications of your actions. These decisions affect the health of us all.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. I'm well under 10 minutes, but I don't know if anyone has any questions.

**Mrs Marion Boyd (London Centre):** Thank you very much for coming. I certainly think you're right; that is what we're looking at. We've certainly seen it happen in other cities, haven't we?

**Mr Wellner:** Absolutely.

**Mrs Boyd:** Wouldn't you think we could learn from the mistakes others have made?

**Mr Wellner:** I would hope so.

**Mrs Boyd:** One of the things you're talking about is the sort of domino effect that's happening with all these changes.

**Mr Wellner:** Absolutely. It's not the bill alone. It's other things that go with it. My understanding is that the announcement by the Minister of Transportation on transit, for instance, has not even been assigned a bill number. It's just one of those things in the ether at the moment. But I feel very connected to this.

**Mrs Boyd:** I think a lot of the downloading hasn't actually been a bill yet either, so we don't really know

until we see the detail what is going to happen. We say the devil is in the detail, in many cases.

One issue is the whole issue of privatization of water and sewage. I would think that would be another aspect to this whole issue around environment. That could be a real problem with the downloading.

**Mr Wellner:** Certainly the possibility of the privatization of transit systems is also, well, not necessarily on the table; it hasn't been put there but it's an option, particularly if the government, as it says now, is going to guarantee no provincial tax increases.

One would wonder how some of these municipalities are going to pay for transit. Offloading transit to the private sector might be an option, but it's certainly going to be a very different-looking transit system. The roads are going to be much more full of cars and obviously the air is going to be a lot worse.

**Mrs Boyd:** Of course the condition of the roads may be quite different, because that's another download that is really going to cause us a lot of problems. If our roads are in bad shape, it creates more and more problems with the pollution you're talking about, doesn't it?

**Mr Wellner:** Absolutely.

**Mrs Boyd:** Thank you very much for coming.

#### SHELLEY PETRIE

**The Chair:** Would Shelley Petrie please come forward. Good evening, Ms Petrie. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Shelley Petrie:** Mr Chair and members of committee, more garbage created in a megacity. As an environmentalist who has worked on waste issues for six years, I fear a new mega-council, faced with an increase in the generation of garbage, will not be able to manage local waste diversion programs in our communities and neighbourhoods and that this will threaten the health of our communities.

I submit to you that history shows accessible local governments are important to the success of the many reduction, reuse and even recycling programs residents now participate in. Local municipalities responsible for the collection of garbage have operated and funded programs that help citizens reduce the amount of waste they set on the curb and have initiated many of the programs that Metro is now committed to.

For years, cities have worked with numerous community groups and volunteers to implement and administer waste diversion programs in communities. Being closer to citizens, together they have identified what messages are missing in communities that present barriers to high diversion. Cities also recognize the value of advertising in local newspapers and recognize that our diverse communities provide unique and valuable input necessary to ensuring the success of any program.

I have a few examples. One of them is recycling programs. Annual city festivals and advertising in community newspapers are used to promote diversion to local residents. Last year, for instance, the city of East York set up a competition among students in East York, North York and Scarborough. They decorated a city-owned recycling truck highlighting Waste Reduction Week. East York has established a link between its community

development and environment departments to recognize the value in establishing visible educational and promotional opportunities directly in their communities.

Scarborough operates a program for bulk collection of recyclables in apartments. Although Metro is now involved in this program, again the initiative sprung from the local government by listening to its citizens.

**Commercial composting programs:** The city of Toronto has been attentive to the needs of unique commercial areas in its boundaries, notably east Chinatown, Kensington market and west Chinatown. Due to the nature of these businesses, the amount of garbage set out on the curb each night is well above the average. Residents and businesses have been discussing solutions for years, with pilot projects being funded by the city, such as the greengrocers waste reduction program and a west Chinatown organic waste audit survey. Today Metro and the city are funding a vermi-composter pilot in the market and the city would like to do more. The existence of these projects is largely credited to support from the city initially given to businesses and community groups involved in the projects today.

**Reuse programs** for clothes, furniture, and sports equipment are operated by most municipalities — not Metro — by establishing local depots or organizing community swap days. Scarborough has an annual reuse sports equipment event. Toronto has donated warehouse space to Access to Excess, a local group that collects furniture for reuse, and has created a Toronto Reuse It directory. Cities often donate space and vehicles for these programs.

**White goods collections:** Each municipality operates a white goods collection — these are large appliances — for residents outside Metro programs. Scarborough and the city of York even repair and donate some of these goods back into the community.

Metro is currently stalled at a 21% diversion rate from the residential waste stream. Many of the above programs are unique and offer lessons to be learned to their neighbouring municipalities.

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Although Metro does have a communications plan to accompany these diversion programs, all six local municipalities identify a strong need within their communities for additional education and promotional materials. These needs arise from differences among communities, addressing diversity in language and culture unique to neighbourhoods throughout Metro and the need to bring waste diversion messages closer to people's communities and lives by utilizing specific opportunities in each community.

**Disposal:** The municipality of Metro Toronto is responsible for garbage disposal. However, this has not stopped area municipalities from expressing objections or supports for particular disposal facilities and their locations. The city of Toronto banned the construction and operation of garbage incinerators within its city limits. The adopted bylaw was supported due to overwhelming past and present public opposition to incineration as a polluting technology. Metro Toronto will be inviting proposals from incinerator companies to potentially burn Metro's garbage in the future. The Metro government is also

appealing the city of Toronto ban on incineration at the Ontario Municipal Board.

The temptation to solve the garbage crisis by sending useful materials like paper to a huge incinerator will increase, and the city of Toronto's ban on garbage incinerators will no doubt be overturned in a new megacity. Residents' health and environmental concerns will evaporate up the smokestack and our children will see increased health risks from dioxin and furans emissions from incinerators in the new Toronto.

To ensure the loss of these successful programs does not become a reality in the new megacity, the Ontario government could provide legislation that encourages the best use of materials and environmentally superior waste diversion programs. The highly respected blue box program is an everyday fixture across our cities, but with our generation of garbage still on the rise, recycling programs are not enough. Reusing goods reduces the extraction of our resources and the use of additional materials in the manufacturing or recycling of goods.

Unfortunately, to date, our provincial government has not shown leadership on this issue. A recent example is the recommendations released by the Red Tape Review Commission. The report recommends dropping regulation 340, requiring 30% of soft drinks to be sold in reusable or refillable containers. This action disregards the environmental and health threats posed by the continuing increase in our generation of garbage.

By dropping the legislation on refillable bottles for soft drinks containers, the government is turning the 3Rs — reduce, reuse and recycle — hierarchy upside down and it's legislating pollution. Recycling plastic bottles is a toxic process and burdens blue box programs with high collection costs. As the rest of the world moves forward, reducing their generation of garbage, Ontario is moving backwards and relying solely on recycling. Without this leadership, the new megacity will too. Ignoring the environmental merits of reuse will create a new mess in Toronto.

Without provincial leadership, the new Toronto will only succeed in creating more garbage and our beautiful, clean city will look like New York.

**Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre):** Thank you, Ms Petrie, for coming here this evening. I have a question, and that is, have you had the opportunity to assess the environmental impacts of, say, the Golden report or the six mayors' report, where Scarborough was responsible for the removal and disposal of garbage not only in Scarborough but North York, Etobicoke, East York and York?

**Ms Petrie:** I don't think I understood the question.

**Mr Newman:** There have been other reports that have come forward. The six mayors had a report and in that report they charged each of the six municipalities with a certain responsibility. Scarborough was given the responsibility of collecting and disposing of all the garbage throughout present-day Metro.

**Ms Petrie:** The way I see the garbage problem as it stands with a new megacity is that we will lose a lot of our diversion programs, that we will not go beyond the 21% we're established at right now. There is so much opportunity out there to go beyond this and those creative

waste reduction ideas are coming from local communities; they're not coming from Metro Hall.

Disposal is a different question. I don't think each municipality — because we don't have any land — can go out and site their own disposal facility. I think that's better done even in a GTA sense than anything else.

The fear I see with a new megacity is that it will continue in the route that Metro has taken and start either shipping our garbage to the States and laying our problem on other communities that do not want it, and have clearly stated that, or it will turn to incineration within our own communities, where we have seen mass opposition to it and tons of studies that this technology is polluting.

Disposal has to be revisited as maybe a GTA issue where communities that work to achieve maximum diversion — and that is shown in even large urban areas to be able to achieve 60% to 80%; you get organics out of the waste stream and you've got a landfill with a lot fewer problems because they contribute to a lot of the methane and leaks of hazardous waste — could come up with a site that is local so that we take care of our own garbage and it's a safer landfill because you're achieving such high diversion. These landfills last longer, so they're not costing taxpayers as much money because of not having to site so many landfills within a 50-year span or something.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, we've exhausted the allotted time. Thank you very much, Ms Petrie, for coming forward and making your presentation.

#### NELLY YOUNG

**The Chair:** Would Nelly Young please come forward. Good evening and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Nelly Young:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak at these hearings. My name is Nelly Auster Young. I'm a citizen of Toronto, an active member in my neighbourhood residents' association, a partner in a small consulting business and a property owner. Until the Harris government decided the environment was not important, I worked for the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

I have lived and worked in this city since 1981 and it's been an eye-opener for me. I grew up in Montreal when it was run by Drapeau's political machine. Municipal politics never struck me as something within my reach. Even when reforms became possible, it still seemed closed off to ordinary citizens except at election time. Over the years, living in Toronto, I learned to appreciate the accessibility of municipal government. I never realized how much until Mike Harris and Al Leach launched this mega-disaster, this attempt to globalize Toronto at the expense of its citizens.

Bill 103 threatens the closest thing we have to democracy. Democratic government is frustrating and slow-moving. Different voices have to be respected and a viable consensus reached whenever possible, after full and open public consultation and debate. What often feels like a snail-like process in this rapidly moving new world order has an important, long-term advantage. When many different people and special interests are involved in the decision-making process, they have a stake in making those decisions work.

This government, its arrogant leaders and misguided supporters have systematically cut the people out of the process. That exclusion, the condescending disrespect this government has for the people it purports to govern, is responsible for the groundswell of popular opposition it seeks to discredit. If this government is legitimate, it must speak to and listen to all of its citizens, not just the hidden circle of powerful friends.

As with so many others speaking at these hearings, this is the first time I've exercised this democratic right. While it is an intimidating experience, I guess this government is to be recognized for creating a climate where citizens have been compelled to ask themselves what democracy means to them and to act accordingly.

I am unequivocally opposed to Bill 103. It is a reprehensible piece of legislation which would deny people in the six cities effective elected representation at the municipal level, first by giving retroactive control to appointed trustees unaccountable to the law and then by handing the reins to a transition team, equally immune to legal challenges.

To add insult to injury, we get screwed twice because municipal taxes will pay for all their salaries. Will elected officials run the proposed megacity? No. They will be a puppet government. According to Bill 103, dissolution of the board of trustees and of the transition team is left to the discretion of the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Did the election of Al Leach and Mike Harris make them gods of Ontario?

#### 2010

I have attended a good number of meetings in different communities and am encouraged by the many Tory supporters who have turned against the unprogressive, radically surgical tactics of this government. Others have spoken eloquently on how this Tory government's policies and procedures go against the Progressive Conservative philosophy.

I'm concerned about the casual disregard Al Leach, Mike Harris and their spokespeople have for honesty. Steve Gilchrist has been the mega-madness point man at some of those meetings. Confronted with direct questions, he has been astonishingly short on facts and figures but long on rhetoric and evasive ploys.

Most people aren't fooled. Does Mr Gilchrist think, for example, that the six mayors' hasty and ill-conceived compromise proposal back in December would have received any more support from Metro citizens than Bill 103? Had it not been consigned to the scrap heap of history when Crombie's Who Does What committee came out with its recommendations, Metro residents would have trashed it precisely because it conceded a substantial reduction in elected municipal representatives.

Mr Gilchrist likes to cite a Scarborough poll which he claims was 80% in favour of amalgamation. According to Mayor Faubert, the question was never asked. The poll asked "(1) Are you in favour of lower taxes? (2) Are you in favour of actual value assessment? and (3) Are you in favour of fewer politicians?"

This twisting of the truth is typical of Harris government strategy. The poll taken to determine where the welfare recipients have gone they consider valid, although only those with phones could be polled. They consider

the KPMG report valid even though the consultants were forbidden to contact the municipal governments. Yet they discredit the referenda taking place in the six municipalities, most of which follow the guidelines in their own legislation.

Lest we forget, this government ignored all pleas for the province to hold one official referendum throughout Metro. Because they refused, the municipalities had to do so. Their citizens demanded it. Each went a different way because the culture and politics of each municipality are different. That's the whole point, isn't it? The amalgamation is a shotgun wedding. What kind of a marriage will that be?

Much has already been said and more will be said about Bill 103: about its failure to deal with the GTA; about its frightening parallel for public education in Bill 104; about the regressive offloading on to property taxes of services which should be funded more equitably through the income tax; about the privatization of services which will be forced on an increasingly bankrupt megacity. Considering all the added responsibilities and costs dumped on the municipal level, will a new megacity be free to set policy? No. As is the case with the board of trustees and transition team, the city will pay the bills but the province will call the shots.

People shouldn't be deluded by the billion-dollar carrot we keep hearing will be available to save the megacity from bankruptcy. It doesn't come without a price and there are conditions attached — nothing short of blackmail — to ensure the megacity moves in the direction the province wants. They'll make sure this time welfare will work. The stage is being set for privatization of public resources and public services. Is this for the public good? No. It's for the profit of influential Tory friends.

Strong popular opposition to this mega-mania, not only in Metro but all over the province, is growing every day. More and more people are seeing through the simplistic, sound-bite propaganda and the slick, deceptive ads paid for by taxpayers without their permission. No one opposed to this government's agenda is advocating the status quo, and in your heart of hearts you know it. We want reforms too, but you don't have to create a monster city to ensure that a single parks department cuts the grass.

Let's face it, this is not about rationalizing services; quite the opposite. This is clearly a grab for power and money. It's an efficient but immoral way for Premier Harris to keep his promise of a tax cut. What about all the other promises he's broken?

Bill 103 is a totally anti-democratic bill being pushed through by sheer demagoguery. It must be scrapped. Yes, the time for change is here and this government has engineered it. The means it has employed are utterly repulsive. But the outcome can still be positive.

Right now, people are coming to meetings and sharing their many concerns. They're sickened, saddened and angry. But their energies are focused on the referendum. If this government were to do the honourable thing, the courageous thing, admit this legislation is a mega-mistake and scrap it, it's not too late to turn things around. If you want to change governance to meet the new realities, involve the people who have to live with the changes. If

you don't let them work with you, they'll work against you and what kind of future is that?

Call for a constituent assembly. We're ready to talk. Start the process. We're ready to work together. But you've got to listen. The battleground is drawn. On one side stands democracy, on the other demagoguery. The choice is yours.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Young, for your presentation. We've now effectively used up all of your time. We appreciate you coming forward tonight.

### NORMAN WILSON

**The Chair:** Would Norman Wilson please come forward. Good evening, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Norman Wilson:** Just so everyone won't be disappointed, I should point out that I'm like the previous three or four speakers: I'm not a professional environmentalist and never have been. What I am is someone who lives in Toronto because I like Toronto and that's more or less why I'm here.

It's not just me who likes Toronto. Toronto is world famous as being kind of a special place where people are comfortable living and working. According to Fortune magazine, it's the best place in the world. Who wants to argue with them?

That doesn't mean we can stand still. There are problems with the current, two-level Metro government. There are things that are being done twice. There's far too much energy being lost in turf squabbles. Much more importantly, we badly need better coordination of municipal services and better sharing of resources among the municipalities in the whole greater Toronto area. The old Metro boundaries are just obsolete and it's time we faced that. We've known about this for quite a while, certainly since the GTA task force report came out a year ago, and it's time to do something about all this.

What does the government propose to do? The government proposes to do something about this through Bill 103, by discarding the existing municipal governments within Metro and replacing them with a single city of Toronto government.

This bill is badly flawed. It asserts that a single city government is the right answer, but there's been no clear case made that that's so. The citizens' concerns about that are being utterly ignored. It also completely ignores the real issue, which is finding a way for the entire GTA to work together better. In fact, it looks like Bill 103 may make that much harder. It's also just a badly written law. It's full of holes that invite uncontrolled government waste and abuse of power. The people of Ontario deserve something better than this.

The biggest problem with the proposal for a single Toronto city government is that it's the only proposal on the table. The government just hasn't been willing to discuss the alternatives. It hasn't even given clear reasons why its proposal is best. All we hear are bald assertions with no facts to back them up.

For example, when the East York Mirror asked the minister to name a single study supporting amalgamation, he couldn't name one. Even the claim that a single city government will save money is suspect. On the front page of the government's own One Toronto for All of Us

flyer, the thing that got stuck in everyone's mailboxes, the thing that became somewhat famous in the paper a few weeks for other reasons, it's admitted right there that the savings estimates for the proposed megacity, according to the KPMG study, are "consistent with others we have heard recently from the six mayors in Metro."

What were the six mayors proposing? The six mayors were proposing replacing the existing Metro level of government with a lightweight coordinating council, leaving the six individual municipal governments in place and redistributing services. In other words, what the One Toronto flyer says outright is that it's possible to save just as much money without amalgamation.

2020

What's wrong with a single city government? Here are some of my concerns.

In the first place, it just seems common sense that local concerns should be addressed locally. If my city councillor belongs only to a Metro-wide government, his attention's not going to be focused on my local ward; it's going to be focused on Metro-wide issues. That's what all his peers are going to be talking about. So how can he be expected to address local issues? He's not going to have time for it.

Second, Toronto works as well as it does, and certainly I find Toronto as pleasant a place to live as it is, because it's not all the same. People living in different parts of Metro and of the GTA can live in different ways. They can choose to pay for different mixes of local services, and because it isn't all one government that can be arranged.

I could choose to live in North York and have some of my property taxes go for clearing snow off my sidewalk or I could choose to live in Toronto and shovel my own walk and have the money go to the library system or the parks. I could choose to live in a spread-out suburb in Etobicoke, or in a dense single-family neighbourhood in East York or in a shiny condo or apartment in downtown. How can we be sure that this important diversity will be preserved under a single government with a single set of bylaws, a single set of planners and a single set of zoning policies?

Similarly, the fact that Toronto is made of independent pieces makes it a lot easier to try experiments. A single municipality can try a new kind of zoning or a controversial bylaw like restricting smoking or, for that matter, some of the waste diversion programs we heard about earlier. If a single municipality can try it, then if it works out, the rest of the region can follow, and if it doesn't work out, the damage is limited. Even if it's a big disaster, it's just one municipality that has to clean up.

I think this kind of experimentation's crucial if Toronto is going to remain alive and is going to continue to evolve and change the way it's going to have to as time goes on. Won't having a single city government make that a lot harder?

In a single government, representatives from the downtown core are going to be outnumbered by representatives from the suburbs, and as we've heard earlier tonight, that's just been a disaster in other North American cities. What often happens is that, on the one hand, no one wants to spend the money for the services downtown

needs and, on the other hand, the downtown tax base gets robbed to pay for the cost of the suburbs.

Downtown Toronto is unique in North America and I think it's key to the entire region and the entire province. A single city government will inevitably be dominated by non-downtowners who don't understand downtown. How do we assure that government won't damage downtown just because the majority doesn't understand how to deal with it?

Finally, as two taxpayer-funded studies, the Golden task force and the Crombie committee, have said in fairly forceful terms, the real problem here isn't Metro, it's the GTA; it's coordinating the municipal governments throughout the region. Right now there's already enough rivalry between Metro and the surrounding governments to make that difficult. Won't having a big, monolithic government in the middle make that even harder? Won't it give the surrounding governments even more to be scared of, that they're going to be swallowed by this single entity that has half the population and the bulk of the economic activity?

Beyond that, Bill 103 creates a board of trustees and a transition team to oversee and manage the creation of the new government. These boards are given sweeping powers with essentially no checks. This just invites abuse of power and waste of my tax money. For example, the trustees' and transition team's decisions are declared final and not subject to judicial review. Why is that appropriate? What's the emergency that justifies that?

The trustees' and transition team's expenses, including their salaries, are to be paid by Metro. That means paid by my property tax dollars. There's no process provided to review or even control those expenses. As the proposed law stands, the trustees could award themselves six-digit salaries or the transition team could decide to hold all their meetings in the Bahamas at my expense. Where are the controls to prevent that?

The bill provides that the minister may dissolve the two boards on or after January 31, 1998, but there's no requirement for him to do that then or at any other time. As the proposed law stands, the province could just refuse to allow the new city government to function independently and leave the trustees in place indefinitely.

This lack of control is frightening. It leaves the trustees and transition team no clear incentive to behave reasonably, and it leaves us ordinary Ontarians no reason to believe they will. Since nearly every detail of the new city's structure and function is left to the trustees and the transition team, or the minister, this lack of accountability is just unacceptable.

If the government wants to propose a new structure for Toronto, it should make its proposals up front; it should spell things out. It shouldn't just pass legislation that appoints someone to figure it out later and gives them carte blanche. The people of Ontario deserve better protection against bad policy and wasted tax dollars and there just isn't any in Bill 103.

The proposed bill presents a solution of the wrong problem: Metro rather than the GTA. It asserts that a particular solution is the right one when the government can't present coherent evidence for that, and in general it raises concerns rather than inspiring confidence. It looks

half-baked, as if the government just didn't do its homework before submitting the legislation.

Ontario shouldn't have half-baked laws, should it? More important, Ontarians just can't afford the risk of screwing up Toronto. If the new city structure doesn't work right, the economy of the whole province is at risk. With stakes so high, it's fair to expect the government to lay out a clear and complete plan, not just to assert vague principles and appoint someone to work out the details later. Bill 103 just isn't complete enough to trust.

If the government is serious about solving Toronto's problems, they should admit their error, withdraw the present bill and produce a replacement which attacks the real problem — GTA coordination, not just Metro — which comprises a complete plan so that the Legislature and all Ontarians can see clearly just what is intended before a decision is made; which the government's prepared to support with hard facts and citations, not just the present vague, feel-good statements, hand-waving and TV commercials about electricians; and which draws on the current public debate to try to find an answer which can be accepted through consensus, which people can feel comfortable with, rather than imposing something by fiat.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Wilson, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

#### ANNE BERMONTE

**The Chair:** Would Anne Bermonte please come forward. Good evening, Ms Bermonte. Welcome to the committee.

#### *Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Order. Gentlemen, you're infringing on the time of the presenter. The presenter has taken the time to prepare a presentation tonight, may I remind you all, and let's just have some respect for that.

**Mr Colle:** It's those Etobicoke people.

**The Chair:** Mr Colle. Go ahead.

**Ms Anne Bermonte:** Thank you, Mr Chair. We understand the time is getting late and I'm sure you're all very tired.

#### *Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order, please, gentlemen. Have some respect for the witness, please. She's taken time to come to make her presentation.

**Ms Bermonte:** Good evening, all. My name is Anne Bermonte and I'm here tonight to communicate a message which has been repeated by many others. I too am concerned about Bill 103 and the related megacity legislation, which I believe will result in Toronto's downfall. A livable, vibrant, exciting, economically and culturally important city will wither away.

I am also concerned that by extension it will have equally damaging effects on the quality of life across this province. Individuals from all across Ontario, cities and towns like Terrace Bay, Elora, Dundas, Ancaster, Kingston and Ottawa, echo the same concern: Amalgamation will have irreversible and devastating consequences on all our respective communities.

You have heard from the experts — Jane Jacobs, David Crombie, Anne Golden, Jack Diamond, Eb Zeidler — who have outlined the numerous problems with Bill

103 and its legislative menagerie. The government is playing a shell game with its numbers. Amalgamation, as it is currently being proposed, will be very expensive.

The true costs of Bill 103 and related megacity legislation, in terms of a seriously diminished quality of life, loss of opportunities and the erosion of the democratic process for citizens of this area, are starting to reveal themselves. For example, the numbers the government is using to sell amalgamation are an optical illusion. The per capita cost of maintaining 106 representatives across Metro Toronto is \$5. Compare this to the \$6 per capita cost resulting from reducing the number of representatives to 45 while doubling the size of their constituency and increasing their responsibilities.

The average cost of running a Toronto-based provincial member's office is \$300,000 while the average cost of running a local councillor's office is \$113,000. Perhaps you think \$300,000 is too high. I'm sure the average citizen in East York will agree with me that \$62,000, their average cost per politician, financially makes more sense than the \$311,000 which will result when you have 44 local politicians and one mega-mayor representing 2.3 million people.

### 2030

This \$2.3-million error is just the beginning. Even more disturbing, the costs continue to increase. Two weeks ago unaccounted-for costs were approximately \$390 million, last week the figure rose to \$500 million and today reports reveal that senior staff at the finance ministry put the number at \$866 million. Also, the estimated costs of amalgamation alone will result in an amount somewhere between \$200 million and \$400 million which has to paid up front. Where is this money going to come from? Once amalgamation happens it will be too late to make the necessary adjustments, resulting in even more costs and trauma to our city and citizens. I agree that change is required. I believe that as citizens of Toronto and Ontario we want to continue to be recognized as the best place in the world in which to work and live. As Mayor Hall said to you last week, "Slow down and get it right."

In reducing the number of representatives from 106 to 45, you are effectively silencing the voice of the people. Each representative will be responsible for a constituency averaging 53,000, doubling the ratio between number of constituents to politician, whereas in the Premier's home town municipal representation is one politician to 5,300 people. Perhaps cost savings could happen there first. Perhaps North Bay doesn't even need a town council. Why not just appoint a trustee?

The government's afterthought of establishing neighbourhood committees is not the answer. Look to New York City, which has been held up by this government as the model Toronto ought to emulate. The existence of borough councils entrenches the divergent interests of citizens from Manhattan, Staten Island, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. By comparison, the current Metropolitan Toronto structure is practically seamless. Also, do any of you recall that in 1975 New York City had to be rescued from the brink of bankruptcy?

Why are you dismissing the recommendations and findings from provincially commissioned task forces like

the Fair Tax Commission, the GTA Task Force, the Trimmer panel and most recently the Who Does What panel?

Both the GTA Task Force and the Crombie panel recommended that the greater Toronto area's five regions be disbanded and replaced with a GTA-wide service body with limited taxing powers in order to redress the inequities that currently exist between the 905 and 416 areas. The GTA Task Force also emphasized the need to strengthen Metro's six municipalities, yet in drafting Bill 103, Mr Leach has done the exact opposite.

The Who Does What panel recommended implementation of actual value assessment in which current value is to be determined by current use. Yet your government is proposing that it be implemented on the basis of best and highest use. Of all the options Crombie's group presented to your government, he made it very clear that the worst scenario was amalgamation of the Metro municipalities without addressing the regional economic disparities and the need for management of certain services on a regional basis, like economic development, watershed management, waste disposal and transportation. Where did Bill 103 come from? Where is your research and analysis? The \$100,000 KPMG report you commissioned has been dismissed by urban experts and planners like Andrew Sancton and Wendell Cox.

I am proud to live in the city of Toronto. I am proud to show it off to friends, family and strangers, to take them to the numerous arts and culture festivals occurring throughout our too short summer. As somebody who works in Toronto's non-profit arts community, I love to boast about the fact that we're the third-largest theatre city in the English-speaking world, that the Toronto International Film Festival is on par with Cannes, that because of the incredible critical mass of artists and arts organizations, Toronto is on the leading edge of the new knowledge-based economy.

Internationally renowned playwright Tomson Highway says it best: The choices are making Toronto into a world-class centre easily on par with such luminous, thriving centres as Barcelona, Rome or Paris or making it into an insignificant backwater culturally, economically, politically, a place that nobody visits.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much for a very incisive presentation. There have been a number before you. I think the quality is superb, and certainly they're all very heartfelt, which I think makes them even more compelling.

The real dilemma we have here is that a lot of persons like yourself and others who have spoken tonight live in the general downtown of Toronto and you've made it work, you find it very friendly and you find it a good place to work and be proud of.

The government is saying: "That's all going to remain the same. We make the megacity. You people who are concerned are overreacting." Your life experience, your work experience that makes the downtown work basically is what they're saying is irrelevant because they have this master plan for the megacity.

Are you overreacting? Why are you so concerned that the megacity might jeopardize your live-and-work place?

**Ms Bermonte:** I think the one word is "access," and the fact that Toronto works is because our local politi-

cians are accessible, because there are individuals who give of their time in an incredible way. I work with an organization where we have over 70 volunteers who provide us with incredible advice and expertise.

I think we're accessible, we're grass-roots, we're hands on, and that is the difference. When you get into a city the size of the proposed megacity, 2.3 million people, when you have a politician who has to respond the needs of 53,000 people — Mr Colle, I know your constituency is around 73,000. I'm sure you do your best. You all do your best, I'm sure, to be an effective representative, but it is hard.

The fact is that this provincial government is set up very differently from local government. Certain checks and balances are in place at the provincial level that are not in place at the local level.

If you're going to go to a city on that level, you have to look at the whole governance structure. You have to start looking at perhaps a more parliamentary system rather than the current municipal system.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Bermonte.

**Ms Bermonte:** It's two different structures. Here you are trying —

**The Vice-Chair:** We appreciate your coming. Thank you for your presentation.

#### STEPHEN KERR

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like Stephen Kerr to come forward. Good evening, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Stephen Kerr:** My name is Stephen Kerr. I live in Cabbagetown. Like the previous presenter, I'm a practising artist, and I work for a local telephone company.

I have a great concern that there has been no effort to expand these hearings across the province. I would urge the committee to please take into consideration the overwhelming opposition to this bill that has been heard in testimony to date.

The issues that Bill 103 represents are much larger than the mere unwanted elimination of local governments which are not only popular with their electors but are the very model for municipalities all over the continent. The forced amalgamation without reference to a binding referendum indicates the policy of a government that does not care about the effect of its actions on the public.

#### 2040

As governed today, Toronto not only works but is the model for other municipal governments in North America. Have we forgotten that the UN has judged ours the most livable city in the world? When I hear Ontario government spokespeople singing the praises of New York and Chicago, it makes me ill. I travel in these cities on business, and Americans there always tell me how lucky I am to live here in Toronto. Last time I was there I met a couple from Long Island who told me that Toronto is a clean, safe city. They said I was lucky to live here, and it's no joke.

Where Toronto is number one in the world in terms of livability, New York is number one in terms of the gap between the lowest and highest income earners. Where Toronto is clean, New York is covered with graffiti and garbage. Where Toronto offers creative mixed-use neigh-

bourhoods and progressive zoning regulations, Chicago offers burned-out industrial parks, gated communities, gutted slums and no hope — oh yes, and art deco. This is not the "world class" we want for ourselves, I think.

Why is our government rushing to dump 200 years of tradition and much innovation for an American model that has proven so faulty, so inefficient and so damaging to so many lives?

The answer is twofold: First of all their corporate supporters stand to make a great deal of money from the privatization of public property, utilities and services. The proposed amalgamation is driven by an extreme idea that is opposed to citizen input and in favour of uploading all profitable public venture into private hands where money can be made, and downloading all social costs on to municipalities and therefore off the provincial government's balance sheet so as to reduce the deficit on paper, at least. As of today it doesn't even seem that the government has informed the public of all the costs involved. There seem to be another billion dollars of social costs that have suddenly appeared, according to people in the finance ministry. The removal of the current local government that speaks for the citizens is crucial to the imposition of that agenda upon an unwilling public.

The transfer of social costs and services on to a level of government that has no legitimate tax base from which to fund them is a profound mistake. The government should not realistically expect the municipalities to exclusively or even partially support these programs and has presented not one shred of evidence that it is possible on the existing tax base. Municipal property taxes will increase dramatically when actual value assessment is combined with the increased burden of funding old age homes, public housing, welfare and other services. We don't know what those costs are going to be and no one has come up with a figure to date.

The transfer is also too complex to manage within the government's current timetable. When responsibility is handed over, the scene will resemble, if not mirror, the current situation with the provincial family benefits program: files lost, cheques late, and no recourse for the public but to a monotone recording saying, "All our lines are busy, please try again." I don't think this is the kind of situation we want for ourselves. This is probably a great curtain behind which to hide.

I will never forget Mr Snobelen's remarks that the goal of the government is to create a "useful crisis." Well, it certainly has done that. This is not the attitude of a democrat nor, curiously, is it the attitude of a serious businessperson. For a government that rests legitimacy not on the support of the public but on its slavish following of current fashion in management theory, the whole amalgamation idea is a non-starter. If the company I worked for tried to carp together so many lose ends so quickly, we would be out of business in six weeks.

The notion of the property tax base as a support for welfare and social assistance costs is sadly misguided. These taxes exist to service property owners in their specific neighbourhoods with their specific needs. This is what the six city governments currently do. This is the responsible way to spend such revenue, because any misapplication of funds can be closely monitored by those who pay for and benefit from the services so funded.

We have responsible government today. The five cities and one borough are not broken. Even KPMG, the government's paid agent, could speak of nothing other than "possible" savings resulting from amalgamation — not "probable" but "possible." It is also possible that the earth is flat, but of course this is contrary to all available evidence, not unlike Bill 103. In this respect we are being governed by the Flat Earth Society.

The Harris government's plan to fund welfare with the property tax will never be supported by the ratepayers. If this plan is carried out, it will sow the seeds of a tax revolt that will virtually end the social safety net in Toronto. But it will be the municipalities that are forced to make the cuts so the provincial government doesn't get any political blood on its hands. That's very convenient. But the public is not fooled. I'm not fooled. We see the hand that holds the knife very well.

Welfare should be funded from income tax. Income tax is there to redistribute income, but the provincial government's income tax revenues, after the unwise proposed tax cut, will fall far short of the level needed to sustain current programs. I think everyone agrees on that. The government has cut as far as it can, and so now must find others to do the cutting and, of course, pay the political price. Getting one's political enemies to unwittingly fulfil one's secret agenda and at the same time assassinate themselves politically must seem like a real smart coup. The problem is that the public, given proper input, would not stand for it, and so the government needs to control the megacity council through unelected trustees to ensure that it has the power to make those unwanted changes and to make them stick.

A reduction in representation for Metro Toronto will keep the citizen at arm's length from her or his government. It will increase the likelihood of corruption as city-wide contracts become more lucrative for private interests able to exploit economies of scale. I'm sure the special relationship that some developers have on occasion enjoyed with a few municipal politicians will become even more special. The most effective check on such corruption is citizen activism and participation in the political process, which is easiest when government is close to a person's life, when you can walk to city hall and when you don't have to penetrate layers of security to talk to municipal politicians.

Go try talking to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani of New York City. You won't be able to just walk up to the guy. My mayor, Barbara Hall, is my neighbour in Cabbagetown. It's an area where many classes of people from middle-class homeowners to immigrants to members of the gay and lesbian community mix and there help to create a very special and vibrant kind of living environment. There are few dividing lines of class that mark off where people live, work and play. That's not the case in New York. I know that I have a voice in this kind of a city, and in a place of 2.3 million people, such accessibility and informality is a treasure which we should be very loath to throw away.

**2050**

I have never met one of the trustees that has usurped power in Toronto. I have never seen them portrayed in the press or interviewed on TV. Their views have not

been held up to public scrutiny. There was no election that brought them to power, no public process for selection of candidates, just a stroke of the pen from the executive branch; in short, no public accountability. Now we find out it's the public's representatives who must be accountable to these so-called trustees. They don't have my trust. I voted for my representatives to have power until the next election. The creation and empowerment by the Harris government of those trustees, whose decisions shall not be challenged by a court, negates the value of my vote and the authority of my elected representatives. This is not acceptable and this is not democracy. The only precedents I can find in history are in Germany, Italy, Spain and South America.

The process here is not only flawed, as is the legislation, it is an insult to the institutions of Parliament and the ideas that are sacred to democracy and to our Canadian society. It is a personal assault on every citizen and his or her intelligence as well as an assault on our communities. Bill 103 and the corporate ideology it stands for must not pass in Ontario. The results will be chaos and a loss of our heritage.

Finally, a megacity government in Toronto would be every Torontonian's worst nightmare: Metro council with a budget and no real power except that imparted to it by unelected officials. This is much worse than any imagined ill represented by the status quo. The Tory process so far has been one of behind-the-scenes manoeuvring, secrecy and deliberate obfuscation. It is an insult and a farce, and we can only expect that the end result of such a process will be at least as bad. Therefore, I demand of you, the committee, to urge the minister to withdraw Bill 103 and promptly resign. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. You've effectively used up your time. I appreciate your coming before the committee tonight.

#### LIZ WHITE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Liz White for our final presentation. Welcome to the committee this evening. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation and if there's time remaining, it will be Ms Boyd from the NDP caucus who will provide the questions.

**Ms Liz White:** I don't think I'll take the 10 minutes. I would just like to point out that there are a number of people from my community who are here to listen to the presentation and to answer any questions at the end, if anybody wishes to come out of the committee and ask questions.

My name is Liz White and I'm a resident of ward 7. I'm also chair of the local anti-amalgamation committee in my area and I'm a co-owner of a small business in the city of Toronto. I'm here with several members of my community who represent the diverse neighbourhoods that I come from and that make up our community and upon whose behalf I'm speaking with regard to the megacity. We are very concerned with the effects that Bill 103 will have on our community.

I come from a community that is represented by Mr Leach, so I just want to take a bit of time to describe what my community is like. St James Town, part of my community, is the size of Lindsay, Ontario. It's com-

prised of 20 buildings and it is in a very small geographic area, but it is also very multicultural. There are five significant languages other than English in that area, and many, many different types of cultures that reside within that very self-contained community.

To the south of the area where I live in, which is Cabbagetown, are Regent Park and Moss Park, which are the largest public housing facilities, I think in Canada, certainly in Ontario. I live in the area of Cabbagetown, but we also have other low-rise communities, such as Winchester Park, Seaton-Ontario-Berkeley, Trefann Court and Corktown. All of those communities sit on the committee that is now discussing the amalgamation, Bill 103. All of those communities are represented on that committee, as are members of all three political parties and a number of other community people.

Let me summarize what our concerns are. I think you have the presentation in front of you but I'll be fairly quick. We are shocked and angry, really, at the unseemly haste and lack of process and disregard for the views of those who live in the affected municipalities that will be forever changed by Bill 103. Our ward in its entirety is included in Mr Leach's riding and yet he has not attended a single community meeting on his megacity proposal in ward 7, nor has he contacted the offices of local councillors, to my knowledge, at least to date, to inquire about any local community meetings that he might attend.

Our second concern is that the government, having hired David Crombie and his committee to decide how to best deal with Toronto and the regions surrounding Toronto, as I read it, has taken exactly the opposite tack to that recommended, ultimately, by Crombie in his final report to the government. If it was our preference, we would recommend that the government take a closer look at Crombie's final report.

We are also opposed to the government's establishment of a board of trustees that oversee what I consider seven duly elected and responsible local government officials. We are also concerned about the transition team that has been set up to set up ward boundaries and to hire top staff for the new megacity. Frankly, we find that process both anti-democratic and highly offensive. We have voted for many, many years in the city of Toronto and have a long, long history of responsible government and local democracy and responsible democracy, and we find it quite offensive to have that removed.

The next area we're concerned about is the offloading. Quite clearly, that is a big concern for our community because we have very poor people in our community. We have a lot of public housing in our community and we feel we're going to end up with the brunt of the problem, certainly within our community, obviously within the city of Toronto and within the Metro area. We feel there is going to be an increasing inequity between the 416 area code locations and the 905 exchange, in which there has been inequity for some time already.

We are also joining with other people in speaking out against putting health care services, welfare and subsidized housing on to the property tax base, which is a regressive taxing system. We think that even the rural communities, where there are retirement communities and aging populations, are going to be greatly concerned by the offloading of these particular programs.

It's our view that we cannot cope with a municipal download of about half a billion dollars, which represents, in our estimation, about a 15% increase in property tax. Many of my neighbours are of modest and low incomes, and some of our small businesses in our communities will be badly hurt.

I also want to speak as a small business person in the city of Toronto. We built a business starting in 1990 at the time of the recession. We built it in the worst time possible to try to build a business. We built it to a point where we now employ five people and one part-time person and we offer extensive volunteer services to people who are doing community time and others who find difficult placement for volunteer work. We are exactly the kind of business that the government talks about as being a good business. It is our view that we are facing, by the very stroke of a pen of this government, property tax increases that will possibly crush our business.

In talking both as a businessperson and somebody who is a resident in ward 7 and somebody who sits on the committee dealing with the amalgamation issue, we ask you and strongly advise you not to implement Bill 103. It is our view that once the rot starts on the inside, it will grow to the outside, and people who live outside of the city of Toronto cannot escape the rot that will occur as a result of the destruction of the city.

We don't want to live in an American-type city, with a rotting core and a suburban population that's desperate to escape. We want people to come to the city and enjoy the city, be part of a healthy community. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms White. Mrs Boyd, three and a half minutes.

**Mrs Boyd:** Thank you very much for coming and for bringing so many of your neighbours with you. I think it is a shame that this is the way people get politically involved, but obviously it has struck a chord with a large number of people in the Metro area, this whole issue about the real destruction of the democratic system as they see it. I think your ward is probably a really good example of people coming together around what concerns them most.

It may sound like a silly question, but can you tell me what your group thinks the government thinks it's doing with this? You've pointed out so many drawbacks. What possible reason would a government have to go ahead with a bill like this, given the opposition to it?

**Ms White:** Even though it sounds like a simple question, I find it a difficult question to answer. In listening to Mr Leach on the radio this morning being angry at the audience who accused him of not loving the city of Toronto and saying that he did love the city of Toronto, I don't know how he can possibly say that and do what he's doing, because I truly believe the kinds of activities that the government is proposing in terms of Metropolitan Toronto itself will destroy the city.

I don't know whether the government is setting up a kind of contest between the 905 people and the 416 people, whether they think that contest is somehow going to get them votes. I don't know. All I know is I have a lot of poor people in my community — and I like them there; I don't mind them being there — but I know those

poor people don't all come from my community; they come from many of your communities and they come to my city. You're asking me in the end to pay for the people who come from your community, who come to the city thinking they can get work and ultimately become unemployed or on welfare or mother's allowance.

I don't resent having those people in my community; in fact I very much support them being there. But what I do resent is being left with the total bill. That's what the residents in my community are saying. That's what the businesses in the greater community that I've been dealing with are saying. That's what my business is saying. We will share the burden, we will absolutely take a lot of responsibility for the people who are in our community, but we don't want to have the whole burden, and you can't escape it.

People who are poor come from all over Ontario to the city of Toronto and we're left with the burden. That's what you're saying. That's what is being said in this particular piece of legislation, and I don't know why that's being done. I don't know whether people in northern Ontario feel that they're not responsible for their poor and women who come to the city to try find work and people who have to come to my municipality because there's subsidized housing. That's why people come to my communities: because they can get housing they can afford.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms White. We appreciate your making your presentation.

That concludes this evening. We stand adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The committee adjourned at 2100.*





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Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Simcoe Centre / -Centre PC)  
Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North / -Nord ND)  
\*Mr Terence H. Young (Halton Centre / -Centre PC)

*\*In attendance / présents*

**Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:**

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington PC) for Mrs Ross  
Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North / -Nord L) for Mr Sergio  
Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East / -Est PC) for Mr Hardeman  
Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale PC) for Mr Tascona  
Mr Morley Kells (Etobicoke-Lakeshore PC) for Mr Danford  
Mr Gerard Kennedy (York South / -Sud L) for Mr Gravelle  
Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre / -Centre PC) for Mr Flaherty  
Mr John L. Parker (York East / -Est PC) for Mrs Ross  
Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt ND) for Mr Len Wood

**Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

Mrs Marion Boyd (London Centre / -Centre ND)  
Ms Marilyn Churley (Riverdale ND)  
Mr Douglas B. Ford (Etobicoke-Humber PC)  
Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles L)  
Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold ND)  
Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre / -Centre L)

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ISSN 1180-5218

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 36th Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 13 February 1997

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 13 février 1997

Standing committee on  
general government

City of Toronto Act, 1996

Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto

Chair: Bart Maves  
Clerk: Lynn Mellor

Président : Bart Maves  
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Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Thursday 13 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Jeudi 13 février 1997

*The committee met at 0904 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

**The Chair (Mr Bart Maves):** Welcome to the standing committee on general government. I remind everybody in the audience that the rules of the Legislature apply in committee rooms. There are no interruptions allowed from the audience, so I'd appreciate it if you'd keep any input to yourself. We're here to hear from presenters, who have taken a lot of time to prepare their presentations. The same thing goes for members on both sides of the table.

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** On a point of order, Mr Chairman, before we begin: As you know, yesterday some questions were raised about the provincially appointed trustees and their impact on the budgetary processes of the seven governments, as raised by Councillor Layton. I think the best way to deal with that is to get the trustees here as soon as possible. I know they are scheduled to appear; I'm just wondering when that will happen.

**The Chair:** As you know, Mr Colle, we sent an invitation to the trustees to appear. We expect to hear back from them today, actually. Can we take that up at that point in time?

**Mr Colle:** They haven't responded yet?

**Ms Elizabeth McLaren:** I'm Elizabeth McLaren, assistant deputy minister. Mr Colle, the board of trustees met last week. They received the letter and they asked for a response to be drafted. They are meeting this morning and will finalize that response and send it over. They are dealing with it; they are not ignoring this committee.

Their concern, if I might jump in before their letter comes, is that there is a court case, as you know. There was a court challenge by the city of Scarborough. That was heard last Thursday. The judge has not yet released his decision. I think the board of trustees feels that while it is still a matter before the court, they should wait. We are expecting that judgement next week, and I think their letter will say what they think they should do after that.

**The Chair:** Maybe, Mr Colle, we can hold a spot in the hearing dates following when we expect a return of the judgement.

**Mr Colle:** I'd like to know, whether the judgement goes one way or the other, that we still will have them here. That's what I'm concerned about. Have they agreed to come?

**The Chair:** I don't know that. I'll find out when I get their message.

**Mr Colle:** Has Mr Leach told them to come? This is what I'm worried about.

**Ms McLaren:** If I could respond, if the judgement were to go against the government, that would mean the government was not empowered to appoint the board of trustees, so the board of trustees would cease to exist until such time as this bill, if it is reported out of committee, is passed. If the judgement goes against the government, there will not be a board of trustees.

**Mr Colle:** Since the judgement is pending and the trustees are at this point in time non-entities, non-functioning pending that court judgement, therefore are they out of commission?

**Ms McLaren:** No, they are not out of commission. Currently, they are carrying on preparing for the work they will be empowered to do if Bill 103 is passed. If the court judgement should say they are not, they will then stop preparing until such time as the bill is passed. In that instance, it would not, I don't think, be appropriate, if they are no longer in existence, to come before the committee.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Chair, I've got a problem with this. If they are still functioning as trustees, they should be before this committee. If they were saying they couldn't come here because of the court case, I could understand that. That would be basically putting the trustees in mothballs; that's fine. But the trustees are obviously active, working for the ministry, dealing with some pretty substantive matters that were brought forward here yesterday. If they are active, I think they should respect this committee and appear before this committee forthwith.

**The Chair:** Mr Colle, the subcommittee report, which the committee as a whole agreed to, said we'd invite the mayors and the trustees. We received notification back from all the mayors that they wanted to appear and indeed they've been scheduled to appear. It sounds like we're going to receive some sort of response from the trustees today. Can we wait to get that response? Then, if they're not going to appear and you want to pursue it further, we can do that. There are other means, with the standing orders, through which we might be able to appeal to them to come. Maybe we should wait for the letter and discuss it further as a committee at that point.

**Mr Colle:** I've got a problem with that. The trustees are functionaries of the minister. These hearings are basically as a result of the minister's legislation. What I

find here is not that the trustees are saying they won't come to the committee; you have the minister basically saying they shouldn't come to the hearings. I find that especially inappropriate considering that these appointed functionaries, trustees of the minister, are carrying on their duties affecting this legislation and the future of the proposal for this legislation. They are basically not being allowed to come here because the minister has said they're waiting for the pending court decision.

I would think it's appropriate, if they're not going to come until the court decision about whether they are legal is rendered, then out of respect to this committee and the legislative process the minister should order the trustees to cease and desist until their legality is decided by the courts.

**0910**

**The Chair:** That isn't a point of order. Whether we want to state more strongly that we want the trustees to come here is a point of order.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Chair, this obviously then goes into a point of privilege of this committee. The committee's function here is to bring forth information and witnesses and government officials who could enlighten the committee in terms of making a better decision on this legislation.

What I find very offensive is that these trustees are saying they can't appear here because of a court decision and they're still carrying on. If they are carrying on, they're being paid by the ministry, they're being directed by the minister; therefore, they should be directed by the minister to come here and explain what their role is and what they're doing in terms of the bill.

If they were really worried about the court case, the minister would therefore say to the trustees, "Cease and desist, because you may be illegal." If they're carrying on these activities which could be illegal right now, I find that an affront not only to this committee but also to the judicial system and to the people of Metropolitan Toronto, who are basically under their trusteeship. You've got 2.3 million people under the trusteeship of these three individuals who are, up until this point, being instructed by the minister not to appear before this committee.

**The Chair:** With respect, I don't think staff said they're being instructed in any way, shape or form at this point. The minister —

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** In fact, Mr Chair —

**The Chair:** I have the floor; excuse me, Mr Gilchrist. Do you want to clarify that, staff?

**Ms McLaren:** The minister has in no way indicated to the board of trustees that they should or should not appear before the committee. It was their concern and legal counsel's that they should continue to meet and get prepared so that when and if this bill is passed, they are ready to perform their functions and not further delay the municipal budget process. But it was deemed by counsel to be inappropriate that they should make, if you will, a public appearance as a board before such time as that court case is decided. I will take your concerns back to the board of trustees.

**The Chair:** I've got Mr Marchese.

**Mr Colle:** Will I get another chance?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** I appreciate what Mr Colle is getting at, but I also appreciate what legal counsel is saying. If the judge makes a ruling, probably very soon, and adjudicates in our favour — that is, rules them out of existence — it solves our problem. If the judge does not rule in our favour, they will appear before the committee — as I understand, that's what we're getting at — soon after that judgement is made, presumably. These people will either appear before us or will be ruled out of existence. The essential point I want to make is that this whole bill is flawed and the whole bill should be defeated, rather than trying to meddle with these trustees.

**The Chair:** That's an opinion, Mr Marchese, and we're going away from the point of order.

**Mr Marchese:** One way or the other, we'll hear from the trustees.

**The Chair:** Committee, we've got a full docket. I would like not to debate this all morning long.

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and The Islands):** The point is that you can't have it both ways. The ministry can't say yes, these people are getting ready, but no, they cannot appear before the committee because of some judicial process. If the ministry is truly concerned about the judicial process going on right now, they shouldn't be doing any work at all, period. We've heard from the assistant deputy minister that they are actually doing some work now. If they're doing some work now, they can appear in front of this committee. The ministry cannot take the position that for some purposes they can carry on with their ministry work but they cannot appear in front of this committee.

**The Chair:** What I'd like to do is wait until we receive notification from the trustees so we all are speaking from the same page.

**Mr Gerretsen:** Can't we have the ministry's assurance that the minister will —

**The Chair:** We've never asked the ministry to ask the trustees. Maybe we can do that.

**Mr Gerretsen:** Then let's ask the minister to invite the trustees to come here.

**The Chair:** Mr Gilchrist, do you want to comment on that?

**Mr Gilchrist:** They have been invited directly. I don't think it would be appropriate for the minister to interfere. It's on the basis of legal counsel, not the minister. If Mr Gerretsen can't understand the distinction, that's very unfortunate.

**Mr Gerretsen:** I can well understand the distinction, Mr Gilchrist. If you can't understand the distinction between the trustees coming before the committee and yet being able —

**The Chair:** Mr Gilchrist has the floor, Mr Gerretsen. Do you want to finish, Mr Gilchrist?

**Mr Gilchrist:** Mr Gerretsen never appreciates when the government has the floor. He thinks this is some kind of rabble.

**The Chair:** I'd appreciate that we stick to the issue at hand.

**Mr Gilchrist:** The bottom line is that the subcommittee report, which was endorsed by the committee, has been followed through. The trustees have been invited. Obviously, they're not going to go against the direction of legal counsel and appear here if that's what they've been told not to do, on the basis of a court hearing. We've already been told that the judgement is imminent. I think this is nothing more than posturing and speechifying. Let's get on with hearing the presentation.

**Mr Gerretsen:** That's just what you've been doing for the last month or so, if not longer.

**Mr Colle:** On a point of personal privilege, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Oh, come on, Mike.

**The Chair:** Mr Colle has the floor.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Chair, as you know, we've heard 200 speakers here. The vast majority have expressed outrage and concern about the trusteeship, which is an integral part of this bill. In fact, this bill is basically a trusteeship bill; there's very little about the form of the new megacity government. It's all about trusteeship and transition.

The point I'm making to you, sir, is that if the government is to respect this committee, since the people appearing before it have expressed that concern about the trusteeship, the ministry should at least have the evenhandedness to put the trusteeship into mothballs until the court case has been heard. That's all I'm saying. That should be done, because they're using that as an excuse not to appear before us. That's the connection. You can't have it both ways, as Mr Gerretsen said.

**The Chair:** I understand what you're saying. It's more of an opinion than a point of privilege, unfortunately.

**Mr Colle:** I think it's the privilege of this committee; that's all I'm saying. They are not appearing before us.

**The Chair:** I will point out one other thing: If the committee has asked someone to appear and they don't want to appear, there are other steps we can take through the standing orders to try to compel someone to appear. Why don't we wait until we receive notification? There are people here who have prepared presentations; I'd like to hear them. When we get that letter, maybe we can discuss further the other avenues available to us. Thank you very much.

#### MICHAEL PRUE

**The Chair:** Mr Prue, my apologies for the delay this morning. You have half an hour. Any time remaining at the end of your presentation will be divided equally among the three caucuses to ask questions.

**Mr Michael Prue:** Thank you very much, Mr Chair and members of the committee. I thank you all for this opportunity to come here today to address you. I'm going to spend about 20 minutes discussing what I think the bill is going to do to the people of East York and try to convince you to steer some other course.

I've said many times that East York is a wonderful place in which to live. It's not the place I was born in; it's the place I came to live in 24 years ago next month. It's a unique and wonderful place. I don't think I could say it any better than the Honourable David Johnson. I'd like to start off with a quote from him because in a

nutshell he said what East Yorkers believe and what we're all about. He said in 1985:

"East York is indeed the Garden of Eden, a community with a special identity, a unique pride, a strong will for independence and a capacity to care for its own. The survival of this municipality has been questioned for years, perhaps decades, but survive it has and survive it will."

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That is as true today as when he spoke those words in 1985. What he was speaking about, at the inaugural meeting of council that year, was past attempts to amalgamate East York. In fact, this is the fourth time we've gone through this process in but 44 years. It seems that once every 11 years, somebody comes up with the idea that East York should be gone.

In 1953, proposals were made when Metropolitan Toronto was first being considered that East York should be amalgamated. Of course that did not happen; it survived as one of the 13 municipalities. Along with Leaside, it survived as a municipality. The councils of the time, in both Leaside and East York, voted against Metropolitan Toronto and against their amalgamation.

In 1965, 12 years later, just like clockwork, Goldenberg reported and recommended that East York and Leaside be gone. The cabinet of the day was a little smarter than that. They chose to combine Leaside and East York and not to amalgamate us, and we survived.

In 1975, the government of the day set up the Robarts commission. There was much speculation and many arguments made that we should go to a four-city model, some of the same things I'm hearing today. Robarts was a man of vision, and he saw that East York was a special and unique place, a place that was financially secure and sound and where the governance was probably the model for everyone else. Rather than say that we should be amalgamated, he very bravely said that we were so good we should be expanded.

Today, this is number four. East Yorkers are getting used to this and we're getting pretty good at fighting for our survival. This is not a new threat. It's made all the time and it's made only for one purpose, because in Metropolitan Toronto we are the smallest of the municipalities. We have 103,000 people spread out over 20 square kilometres — that's eight square miles for those who didn't go to school recently — and we are the smallest. But we are not a small municipality; we are a large municipality. We are the 18th-largest municipality in this province. We are the 35th-largest municipality in this country.

When this idea was first seriously put to me that East York would be gone — again — it was put to me by Minister Al Leach in his office at 777 Bay Street at a meeting with the mayors. We requested a meeting with him when the Toronto Sun reported, in a little, tiny column, that there was going to be a megacity. We all looked at it in disbelief. With the greatest of respect to the Toronto Sun, I thought their journalist had been smoking something funny. But in fact we found out it was true. I attended with the other majors and with Chairman Tonks.

Minister Leach said something I don't think I will ever forget. He said that East York would be gone. Whether

it was one city or four cities, it was time for East York to go. I asked him why. I asked him, was it because we were too small? He said, no, that wasn't the reason. I said: "It had better not be the reason, because we are bigger than lots of places. You're going to have to get rid of Sudbury and North Bay, you're going to have to get rid of Vaughan, you're going to have to get rid of Richmond Hill." He assured me that wasn't the reason. I asked him if it was because we were financially sound and prudent, that we had money in the bank, that we had virtually no debts and would be debt-free by the year 2000. He said that wasn't the reason either, because East York was a model. I said I was glad of that too, because you'd have to get rid of North York and Mississauga and all the other people who have handled their affairs well. I asked him why he was doing it and he said, "I have to do something."

What I have seen over these last few weeks and months is an attempt to do something — no rationale, no reason, just the misguided attempts by someone who thinks he has to do something. I told him at that time I would fight him until the very last, and I have done that and the people of East York have done that. We will not accept a rationale that you have to do something if there's no reason for it.

About East York and why we're so proud to be our own community: We have, as a council, the lowest administrative rate — that is, the administration costs to run our municipality — of any municipality in the GTA. According to the figures prepared by the city of Toronto for the other municipalities in Metro — their figures, not ours — we spend 7.46% on administration costs. Nobody else can do it for that. In contrast, Scarborough spends 11.3% and Toronto spends 10.3%. We spend 7.4%. We are very efficient.

We have the second-lowest rate of employees per 1,000 population in all of Metropolitan Toronto and one of the lowest rates in the entire GTA. We have the highest rate of voluntarism. More than 10% of the people in East York volunteer and are part of our community. We have the lowest rate of crime of any municipality in Metropolitan Toronto. Metropolitan Toronto being the safest large city on this continent, the safest place in that safest large city is East York.

There's a reason for that, and the people know it well. For more than 30 years, we have resisted all attempts to bring in anything that might lead to crime. We have bylaws against and have absolutely no body-rub parlours or escort services. We have one pool hall, which was grandfathered, but we've never given a licence to any others. We have no bingos, though I don't know how those lead to crime. We have no adult videos. We have no adult entertainment. None of those things exists in East York, and we know that if we are amalgamated they will, because the laws of the other municipalities will predominate over us. We have a family-oriented community. I have two anecdotes about this, both while I was on council, the first when Dave Johnson was still mayor.

An escort service set up in Leaside. The citizens came and the council immediately took action. Within three days the escort service was forced to close and was gone. The second one had to do with people selling bubble-gum

cards with naked women on them; they were being sold in a local variety store. A parent called me with concern. A phone call was made to the store. The community police officer came. We took the offending machine out, put it on the street and told the dealer to come and pick it up. That's just the way it is, and that's the way we like it. We don't want to be like the others.

Our financial base is constant and growing. I've heard some people and I've heard some questions — I've read the Hansard — that East York doesn't have enough money. I don't know who's feeding these statistics, but it's growing. In the last three years in our commercial-industrial areas we've given out building permits and seen buildings grow: \$10 million, \$14 million, \$11 million. By all accounts, 1997 is going to be an absolutely huge year. We have a lineup of official plan and zoning bylaw amendments right through the summer as they're trying to get in under the wire before this becomes just complete chaos. We think building this year in East York is going to surpass all others. Of all the Metro municipalities, we survived the recession best.

We had the highest rate of commercial-industrial growth the year before last year, and last year we were second. We have the fastest procedures for planning and zoning in the GTA. We can turn around a business and get a new business in under four months: official plan, zoning bylaw, building permit, construction starts. We've done that for two industries in the last year.

Little East York is the 18th-largest municipality, the 13th-largest industrial base. Don't think we're small. Our industrial base and our percentage of industry are bigger than Ajax, Whitby, Pickering, Milton, Aurora, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, not one of which is facing amalgamation.

Our tax base is 4.2% of that of Metropolitan Toronto; our population is 4.8%. Some people have said, "Look, then you have to get stuff." That's true. From time to time the Metro school board gives money to our school board because we have a lot of students. We have the fastest-growing school board in the province. That's about all; the rest of it, we pay our way.

I was reading through the Hansard and the newspapers, and there are a whole bunch of myths I'd like to dispel. I don't know where these myths come from and I don't know why they're perpetuated by members of this House, by the media and by other people. One of the great ones I see almost every day is that 72% of the services are offered by Metro and only 28% by the municipalities. With the greatest of respect, 72% of the expenditures are by Metro, but not the services.

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If one looks, the amount of tax raised by Metro and the amount raised by the six area municipalities are almost identical. They're at \$1.1 billion each: 50.5% is raised by Metro; 49.5% is raised by the local municipalities. Everything else Metro spends is your money. They spend it for welfare. They spend it from grants. They spend it from highways and grants for highways. What they raise and what they spend are two different things. It's one thing to say that they hand out your welfare money, 80% of which comes from the province, and it's another thing to say what they are actually in control of.

The reality is not that they spend 72%. Almost half their budget is provincial grants. The municipalities get almost nothing. In the case of East York, it's a little over \$1 million a year on a \$60-million budget. In fact, it's been declining. With the greatest of respect, we don't even need it.

**Responsibility for actions:** They don't do half the services, with the greatest of respect. They spend 80% of their money on three things: welfare, which is your money; police and transit, which is your money, or the money put in by the people who pay with their tokens and car tickets. On the other hand, the municipalities provide almost all the service. We provide the service that people see — fire, hydro, health, libraries, garbage, zoning, planning, sidewalks, recreation — we are the ones who collect the tax and we are the ones who issue building permits and make sure this is a safe place to live.

There is almost no duplication among the six municipalities. Each one of our fire departments looks after our own area. Each one of them crosses the border when required. All the municipalities except Toronto are on the same system. We train in the same places; we buy from the same suppliers jointly. Toronto is unique. I can't explain them. Maybe they're a little bit behind us and maybe one day they'll get on the same wavelength. Having said that, the other five of us cooperate in every conceivable way and there is no duplication.

The Ernst and Young report, and I've seen people wave that around, was written by two Americans who didn't even come here. It was kind of a fun report. When I read it, it was kind of a joke, because none of the fire departments was even contacted; they didn't even know what was going on. It was used in Metro figures. The savings inside were to close down 10 firehalls. Anybody can do that. You don't need amalgamation to close down 10 firehalls, but you need a lot of will when you tell people they're not going to get four-minute service. We are set up in every municipality to give that four-minute service. What that means is that if your house is on fire, you can save it. What that means is if you stop breathing, after five minutes you're brain-dead. If you want to give eight-minute service by closing down the firehalls, remember that, and remember that if that's part of this amalgamation plan.

**The police:** I saw the KPMG study and I thought it was rather hilarious, all the money they could save by amalgamating the police. They've been amalgamated since 1953. I think that's a myth someone should remember.

**Parks:** Duplication in parks? I don't know about that, but I know that in the places where Metro has to cut the grass and East York has to cut the grass, you can tell which one is which. You can tell because we have to send out East York crews to cut the Metro grass because we get complaints.

Most of the roads in the municipality are local roads, 90% of them. We have to plow the Metro roads from time to time.

The biggest whopper, I think, and I want to deal with the biggest whopper in this whole sad scenario, is the continuing diatribe by Mr Leach, and Mr Gilchrist has joined him a few times, about me and my council for

giving away the municipal office. I've seen it in the press, I've seen it in Hansard, I've seen it on television, I've heard it in meetings and I even heard the trustees talking about it. This is absolutely one of the most false things that could possibly be imagined.

I'd like to read the motion which I moved, seconded by Councillor Dale, on December 16, not December 18, which Mr Leach talks about. This was before trusteeship, a regular council meeting, December 16:

"Resolved that the council of the Corp of the Borough of East York hereby investigate the transfer of ownership of the East York Civic Centre, 850 Coxwell Avenue, to the East York Foundation as a cultural and artistic facility."

What the East York Foundation is you may or may not know if you don't know much about East York. It is a foundation which was set up in 1964, in advance of the Goldenberg report, to make sure our cultural, historical and other artefacts did not fall into the hands of other people and did not leave East York. In fact, every single artistic, historical and cultural piece of everything we own is in the hands of the foundation. Our Group of Seven paintings are in the hands of the foundation. All our artwork, 10,000 historical pieces of property, Todmorden Mills, is all in the hands of the foundation.

We were attempting to make sure that all those works of art have someplace to be shown, that's all. We investigated the possibility. We found out, and I have pamphlets for the foundation if any of you want to make donations, that yes, they can take the civic centre. Then we found out from the lawyer that we can give it to them, but we have to go through a process which would be impossible. It took one day; that's all it was. For people to keep going on and on about this event is absolutely disgraceful. For this to be the rationale for trusteeship, I am so disappointed if that's the only rationale for having trustees.

We don't need trustees. This is our fifth year in a row where we're coming in with a zero budget. We already passed a zero budget before there were any trustees and we're going to do it again. We don't need anybody to tell us how to spend our money, because we are more fiscally prudent than almost any government in this country.

One of the reasons we wanted to save our city hall wasn't just to have someplace to show the art, but it exists on the Memorial Gardens. The Memorial Gardens were established in 1948 and were dedicated in perpetuity to the men and women who had died in the Second World War in defence of our country. In the centre of that garden sits the cenotaph. Everything we do is in their honour. We did not build the new building without asking the Legion's permission. We did not put the cenotaph there without asking their permission. We did not establish a day care centre without their permission.

I'll tell you we resent the statements made by Minister Leach. We resent the statements made by some of the people in his ministry that they are looking forward with relish to selling off those Memorial Gardens. If I owe a debt to anyone in this country, I owe it to those people. It is a disgrace that even in jest he would state, and I'm quoting from the Toronto Star of December 18, "I've got

five of them for sale right now,' Leach joked about the city halls"; or the earlier statement made by a member of his staff on November 2, 1996: "It would also decide whether to sell off any vacated city halls, which would basically be considered 'real estate assets' at that point, said Leach's policy adviser Jim Murphy" — or Mr Leach making those same statements. If you want to know what precipitated our action, it was those statements.

I read the Hansard of Mr Leach's statement and he talked about how the Golden report talked about four municipalities and getting rid of East York. There are 51 recommendations. Not one of those 51 recommendations says that. I don't know what report Mr Leach refers to. I've called him on this a couple of times. He says it's in there. I've gone back and I've read it again and again, and it's not in there. There was a proposal — there were hundreds of proposals received — that said that, but that is not the recommendation of Anne Golden. I don't know why this myth persists.

The six mayors' report: There are statements made in Hansard about that. That report was made with guns to our heads. We were called into Minister Leach's office. We were told we were going to be amalgamated. We were told there was going to be one level of government, and he told us, "If you want one level and if you want it to be you, come back with a report." So we came back with a report. For 23 days we studied. We worked out an alternative which he didn't buy.

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I didn't make that report and I didn't sign that report with a great deal of pride. I did that trying to save my municipality, but don't think for a minute that this was done for any other purpose except that we had a gun to our heads.

He talks about duplication. If there is duplication, and there's not much of it, the duplication exists between Metro and the area municipalities, not between the municipalities themselves. It is a much smaller duplication, with the greatest of respect, than that which exists between the federal and provincial governments. If you want to get rid of duplication, I would suggest you start there.

Statements made in the press recently, and I want to deal with Mr Clement and his referendum: This is a pretty good whopper too. He stated, and I quote, and he faxed this out, I don't know, in 100,000 copies: "The six mayors decided the question. They are administering the process, they are actively promoting and funding one side of the issue and they are in charge of counting the ballots. Clearly this is not how a referendum ought to be conducted." This of course is not true.

(1) Section 65(5) of the law, which this province passed with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, says that we have the right to hold a referendum, and I voted for that.

(2) The council of the borough of East York, at its meeting held on January 17, 1997, voted unanimously the use of an alternative method of mail-in ballot as permitted by section 42 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996. I voted for that. So did everybody else.

(3) The council of the borough of East York, at its meeting held on January 20, 1997, voted unanimously

upon the wording of the question that would form part of the authorized referendum adopted by council. I too voted for that.

Last but not least, I would assure this committee and I would assure this House that I will not be there on referendum night counting the ballots. I don't know why anyone would think that I will be there counting ballots or any of the mayors will be counting ballots. Your law requires, section 11 and section 12 of the Municipal Act, that the clerk do so with people who are paid and who have sworn an oath. I don't know why this myth persists that our referendum is not legal and binding at least on ourselves, because it is in strict conformity with the law you passed and which was promulgated and came into effect on January 1 this year.

I think that's enough for myths.

**Economic impacts:** You've heard it from everybody. It's in the paper every day. The downloading, according to the Globe yesterday, is up to \$988 million. That's going to mean a lot of money for East Yorkers, \$4 million being taken out of the school boards in Metro and taken to other places in the province. You've heard about the impact of AVA. You've heard hundreds of people talking about how this is going to devastate and ruin the best city in the whole world. You've heard from the board of trade.

Our municipality did a little checking around just to see what the impacts would be on the downloading of services, and I have a package for you which you can have later.

We looked at a couple of properties, what would happen with the downloading, and this was before it mushroomed to \$988 million; this is when it was only around \$500 million. We chose a few properties in East York. We chose my house. My taxes are going to go up \$619. I don't mind that. We chose Mr Parker's house on Cameron Crescent. Mr Parker, your taxes will be going up \$542. We chose Mr Johnson's house on Glenwood Terrace — his will be going up \$690 — and we chose a few others.

The effect on business I think is much more devastating. One of our largest places, Coca-Cola on Overlea, is going to see a \$131,000 increase in their taxes. We wonder for business and we worry for business whether or not they're going to flee to the 905 area or, worse still, even flee to other countries.

I want to wind up and leave some time.

I see some difficulties with what's happening. Number one, the public obviously does not support this initiative. Drive through East York, take some time and see the signs on everybody's lawns.

Second, this one will hinder, not help, the long-term formation of the GTA. I don't know what little tiny municipality — let's pick one, East Gwillimbury — wants to serve on the same place or can serve on the same place with a megacity of 2.3 million people. If you don't have representation by population, I don't know how Metro Toronto wouldn't have its own way on everything or why any of the others would want to cooperate.

Number three, the speed of this amalgamation: This is seven corporations, \$7 billion. I ask you, I question you, if you understand business, how would you like a brand-

new board of directors with 45 people, most of whom don't know each other; how would you like to take them and hand them seven corporations with \$7 billion in assets and say: "Start over again with staff that we've picked for you and that you can't replace for three years. Now go and do a good job"? I don't think it can be done. I think it's going to be devastating.

Number four, you are literally crushing the roots and identity of large groups of people. In East York we hold this almost sacred. You are crushing that identity. We are fighting to maintain that identity and we do not wish to be something that kids read about in the history books.

Last but not least, if you don't understand any of those other things on the government side, please understand that after the last round in 1965 with the amalgamations that took place, most of the Conservative members lost, and in fact most of those places didn't vote Conservative again for 30 years. The feeling out there is so strong that I think you might be contemplating your own political suicide. Please don't do it to us. Please save yourself. Thank you very much.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. I have to remind audiences about participating, and applause is included in that. Please keep that to a minimum.

Mr Prue, thank you very much for coming forward today and making your presentation. You've effectively exhausted all the time for your presentation.

**Mr Prue:** I took a half-hour? Okay.

**The Chair:** I want to thank you for coming forward before the committee today and making it, though. Thank you very much.

#### JANET MAY

**The Chair:** Would Janet May please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee. We're going to need everyone in the room to come to order quickly, please. Mrs May now has the floor.

**Ms Janet May:** My name is Janet May and I lived in North York for 16 years. Three years ago, my family moved to the High Park area in the city of Toronto. I presently work part-time for the Toronto Environmental Alliance, a grass-roots, non-profit, non-governmental organization. I'd like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to address the committee. In my work as a local environmentalist I have learned the importance of participatory democracy and the feeling of empowerment when my concerns are listened to and acted on by local representatives.

I do not support Bill 103 and the downloading of services. Like many others, I believe these changes are too much and are being pushed upon us too quickly. Like many others, I wonder why, if these drastic measures are such an improvement upon our present system, they have to be forced upon us so quickly.

I do think that some type of municipal reform is needed to eliminate duplication of services, but like Mayor Prue, I would agree that this duplication of services is between Metro and the local municipalities. As well, I think that because Bill 103 will have an enormous effect on the environment, this committee should insist that it

be placed on the environmental registry under the Environmental Bill of Rights.

For the past six years, I have worked on the issue of urban pesticide use or rampant lawn spraying and can personally testify to the effectiveness of local municipalities. In 1990, while living in Don Mills in the city of North York, my friends and I, all mothers of young children, became very concerned about pesticide spraying which was taking place on our local parks and school yards. Within two weeks of discussing our concerns with our school trustee, we had convinced the school board to declare a moratorium on pesticide use on board property. Within a month, pesticide use was on the agenda of North York city council. Within a year, a multistakeholder committee had developed a pesticide reduction strategy for the city. Within two years, pesticide use in the city of North York was down by 89%. Presently, the city distributes information about alternatives to pesticides in its hydro bills and holds annual education sessions for the public.

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Six years ago, at the same time as we approached North York, a group of moms just like us went to East York council. East York's response was much more dramatic. A moratorium on pesticide use in parks was declared, and this remains in effect to this day. I recommend that sceptics who think it is impossible to maintain high-quality sports turf without using pesticides go and visit Dieppe Park near Mortimer and Coxwell in East York. I just threw that in as a plug for no pesticide use.

Also for the past six years, grass-roots groups and concerned individuals have been asking Metro council to eliminate pesticide use on Metro parks. Unfortunately, this process has been much slower and at times very frustrating, despite the efforts of some councillors to implement progressive policies. This is due to a larger, often more inefficient bureaucracy. As well, as everyone here probably understands, it is more difficult to reach consensus and find common ground with larger councils that represent more diverse views and interests.

One of the problems I faced while living in Don Mills and attending committee meetings in Metro was distance. It took me an hour to travel to Metro Hall by TTC, and I often spent a whole day waiting for my issue to be discussed. Just this past Monday I spent all day at Metro Hall waiting for an issue to be put on an agenda. This, to me, indicates how inefficient larger governments can be. The volume and complexity of issues on the agendas at Metro committee meetings often makes it difficult to schedule deputants with any accuracy. In contrast, local councils are closer geographically to residents and are able to give deputants specific times to appear at committee meetings. A megacity will be inconvenient for many citizens and will result in decreased citizen input into municipal affairs.

A few weeks ago, the staff at TEA sat down and compiled a list of environmental bylaws, initiatives and programs within each of the municipalities comprising Metro Toronto. Within a very short period of time we had a list of 82 examples, and this list is by no means complete. Some of these programs include the anti-idling bylaw in the city of Toronto, the incineration ban in the city of

Toronto and the pesticide ban in East York. None of these bylaws are to be found across the entire distance of Metro. These programs are the response of local governments to concerns raised by residents and grass-roots community organizations. Some programs are identical, no matter which municipality initiated them, but they may have been implemented at different times. Other programs are very different and reflect the individuality of a community, as shown by my pesticide examples. If taken individually, these 82 programs may seem insignificant, but put together, they are an impressive testament to local accountability and accessibility.

I do not believe the megacity will produce accomplishments like these. Chaos is likely as the new structure struggles to coordinate present municipal bylaws. The added burden of the downloaded services can only result in a city council with too many responsibilities, not enough resources, and minimal accountability to those it is supposed to represent.

I do not believe that environmental issues will even appear on the agenda of a megacity council that will have so many extra responsibilities. Who then will take responsibility for the environment? The present provincial government has in the past year and a half demolished environmental gains that took years to achieve. Environmental deregulation, or letting the foxes guard the henhouse, is a reality. The Ministry of Environment and Energy has slashed its budget and staff this past year. The KPMG report suggests that the megacity can find savings of between \$25 million and \$45 million by selling off waste collection services and waste water treatment facilities. I find it hard to believe our drinking water will not be privatized if the megacity goes through.

Everyone needs clean air to breathe. Everyone needs clean water to drink. Everyone wants their children and grandchildren to have a healthy environment in which to live. My experience has shown that small, local councils are the most responsive to environmental issues. After all, the slogan is, "Think globally, act locally," not "Think globally, act regionally."

I hope our government will pay attention to the concerns and recommendations of those addressing this committee. I hope this government will accept the results of the referenda. I hope this government will have the courage to admit that Bill 103 and the downloading of services are a mistake and will withdraw them.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much. I guess the whole thing comes down to, if you've got this one big government, how is it going to, in a nutshell, make the environmental problems in what we call Metro worse? Is that what you're telling us?

**Ms May:** I'm sorry?

**Mr Colle:** If we've got this one big, monolithic megacity, why is it a given that it's going to make air quality or water quality worse?

**Ms May:** I think you can see it most prominently in the city of Toronto, where grass-roots organizations have been able to go to city council and insist on bike lanes, for example. The city of Toronto has a lot of bike lanes, which of course promotes bicycle transport and not car transport. I think when a megacity comes into effect, bylaws like this are just going to get lost in the shuffle.

**Mr Colle:** It's just that suburban dichotomy where you've got a different interest coming into play.

**Ms May:** Exactly. Etobicoke and Scarborough are very car-dominated.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms May, for coming forward this morning.

### VICKI OBEDKOFF

**The Chair:** Would Vicki Obedkoff please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Rev Vicki Obedkoff:** I've got some printed remarks, but I'd rather wait till I'm finished because I'm going to change the order. Thanks for letting me speak to you.

I wanted to build on what the previous speaker said about the environment. I live in the city of Toronto. I work in Etobicoke as a United Church of Canada minister, but today I'm speaking personally as a citizen.

Amalgamation has already affected my life, and it hasn't even happened. When my best friend died of breast cancer, I said I'd do something, and since then other women I know have died of breast cancer. So I started to do research and have discovered the growing evidence that things going wrong in the environment are now screwing up our immune systems. The evidence has particularly grown with organochlorines. It's some synthetic compounds using chlorines that get into our water chain, our food chain, get into our bodies and trigger malfunctions. The scientific evidence on the Great Lakes is growing for this. Environmental regulations have been crucial to zero tolerance of these kinds of toxins.

Anyway, I saw an ad put by the city of Toronto in the paper saying they were setting up a brand-new committee to implement the recommendations of an Ontario primary cancer prevention report and they were inviting citizens to join it. I thought: "This is wonderful. In memory of my friends, I'm going to dedicate all of my volunteer time to this." So I made all the telephone calls to find out about the committee and was told I should write out my résumé. I did that. I went to the department of public health for my interview, went through all the screening procedures, but then nothing happened and I was told it's all in chaos now. This whole new initiative is not going to go ahead because we're all waiting because we may not even exist as a city any more.

I have no hope that in a megacity with fewer staff spread over a large territory and all the chaos and confusion that's going to result for years to come, there's going to be the guts and the resources to take these kinds of initiatives. The city of Toronto primary cancer commission was going to say even though the province is getting rid of its environmental regulations and going in the opposite direction, we are going to do what we can in our city limits to limit and regulate the transport of toxic chemicals and substances and stuff that gets into our water and food chain. I am hugely personally disappointed in this, obviously not just personally, but for an opportunity to really do what we can with the knowledge we have now to be proactive about what makes people die from cancer.

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It's really hard to follow on the mayor of East York's presentation. It was absolutely wonderful about the

effects that Bill 103 will have on municipalities. I have stuff written here about the downloading, about the extra property taxes, but you all know that. So my question is why. I come back to, why is this being done when none of the experts say it's a good thing?

I was struck by Mayor Prue's comment that Minister Leach wanted to "do something." Then I was watching TV the other night and I saw a clip from the debate with Barbara Hall. I've got here to quote where Mr Leach said, "We've made a promise and we're going to stick to that promise," and I thought, "What promise?" When did Mr Harris or Mr Leach, during the election, promise amalgamation and what promise is he going to break by not going ahead with Bill 103?

I can only think that the promise means provincial tax cuts. If the promise was to give us our provincial tax cuts, it amounts to a microwave for me for the devastation of our cities. If the promise is to get our tax cuts, do we take the cynical view that this is a grab to get at the \$1-billion reserves that the cities hold to help pay for these tax cuts? If it's a rush to pay for the tax cuts and get budget lines off the provincial books and grab extra revenues and reserves and put them on to the provincial spending powers, I think it's cynical and self-serving beyond belief and I can't think a government that was well intentioned would do this. So I believe you won't. I really have to believe that all of us coming here today and over the weeks are making a difference to your common sense.

If it's not then to get at the reserve money and to desperately find money to pay for tax cuts, I think, well, what is the reason? I'm struggling. I know there's a lot of rhetoric that in the new globalized world we have to have big, globalized cities so that some investor knows the name "Toronto" and doesn't have to bother with little names like East York or Etobicoke or Mississauga; the trucks know where to come. Well, I've visited cities in Guatemala and around the world where — what's the word for it? — the corporate vision has won over. Showcases get built. They look really good, but the gap widens between the inner-city core which becomes unlivable and the showcases.

I was conducting a Bible study in a church back in BC last summer. A Korean investor's wife was there and we were going on about high interest rates and how they contribute to the debt and deficit and all that stuff and how if we lower them, the bondholders will take out their money. She said, "No, they won't. You make the rules. If we lose a couple of million dollars because the interest rates go down a little bit, we'll live with that. We've come to Canada because it's safe and it's clean and our children are going to get a good education," and the list went on.

I thought, it's the same with investors. I've heard stories that given the choice between Buffalo and Toronto, people will finally come here to Toronto because it's livable downtown rather than Buffalo, even if it means spending more money to do business. So I don't buy the vision that we have to become bigger is better, to somehow become glitzy and all the people are going to want to come and spend their money here.

I'm almost out of time. I don't know what to contribute that's new except to say, please don't do it. I think you're people of intelligence. You've heard all the arguments and reasons and no one's going to look silly if they back down. If any one of you starts to question Bill 103 and has the courage to raise the questions, the public is going to be extremely grateful.

Mr Leach is not going to look silly or Mr Harris is not going to look weak if somehow he says now: "To be responsible and responsive, we're going to listen to the people. We're going to accept the results of referendums." People are going to cheer and say that is the sign of a maturing government. We know you want to do something decisive, but let it be in accord with the public will. Please slow down and listen to the public will and work in partnership with it.

I'd like to stop there because I would like to engage with some questions.

**Mr Marchese:** Thank you, Ms Obedkoff, for your presentation. You have been very eloquent, as so many before you.

I have a particular point to make and that is, Mr Leach has been quoted as saying, "All I've heard is that it's a bad thing to do, but nobody has given me any evidence it's bad." In fact everybody that has appeared before this committee is saying it's a bad thing. Mayor Prue came and he gave an excellent presentation as to why it's a bad thing and there are a whole lot of studies saying it's a bad thing. How do you respond to the fact that Mr Leach is saying he has seen no evidence against it?

**Ms Obedkoff:** I'm boggled. I don't understand that and I'm boggled. There's tons of evidence. If we can learn from history, Detroit, Chicago, other cities — I lived on the south side of Chicago for two years. They made similar policies. There's a huge gap between the people who are really poor and rotting inner-city cores and the outer suburbs. If this is the vision that people want, we'll get it. But why are we so arrogant as to think the same thing that has happened to other cities is not going to happen to us? We're not nicer people or smarter people than other people globally. It's a historical pattern.

I'd also like to say something about trustees. In 1934 city regional governments were put in the hands of three private trustees. This country was Germany. This is a move that's done in Fascist climates, not democratic countries.

**Mr Marchese:** I'm worried about what Mr Leach is going to do. He's going to pretend that he's listening to people, so he might make some changes to this bill, such as diminishing the power of these trustees. Would that satisfy you if he just did that?

**Ms Obedkoff:** No. I want the government to do the right thing, and the right thing is not to lay devastation to our city. No one is going to think they're silly or weak if they listen to the people and allow the evidence to come through. I'd be the first to write congratulatory letters and work in partnership.

I think Mayor Prue was right. Mr Leach thought he had to do something and it's proceeding in a nonsensical direction.

**Mr Marchese:** Thank you very much.

**Ms Obedkoff:** You're welcome.

### ALEXA McDONOUGH

**The Chair:** Would Alexa McDonough please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

Can I have some order around the room, please.

**Ms Alexa McDonough:** Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before your committee this morning. I do so to share my experience as a resident of the Halifax regional municipality and as a member of the Nova Scotia Legislature when merger legislation for Halifax was introduced and approved.

Municipal amalgamation in Halifax has not delivered. Transition costs were more than double the estimate made by the province's merger coordinator. Transition savings have largely failed to materialize and taxes are going up. There are really three points I want to make to your committee this morning.

The first is that the direct costs of the merger were significant and they came in far above the original estimates — at least \$22 million instead of \$10 million. Four municipalities with a total population of 330,846 were merged. A total cost of \$10 million was estimated by the merger coordinator, one of Nova Scotia's leading chartered accountants by the way. By law, he was given control of expenditures by the municipalities during the pre-merger period to keep costs under control. The mayor of Halifax now states that the total direct costs will be between \$22 million and \$24 million.

The senior Halifax regional municipality staff appointed by the merger coordinator have now recommended that the province should allow the municipality to amortize these costs over a 10-year period rather than the five-year period established by the merger legislation itself. Indirect costs of the merger were never estimated or monitored. There's no doubt that considerable time has been spent on the training and orientation necessary to combine staff from very different corporate cultures, but no dollar figures have ever been assigned.

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The second point I want to make is that taxes did not go down as a result of the merger. They are in fact going up, as are costs. The Halifax merger coordinator forecast savings of \$10 million. These savings were supposed to pay for the costs of the merger, after which property and business taxes would be reduced, thanks to the municipal merger.

Savings, as it turned out, were vastly overestimated by the merger coordinator and it is now estimated that savings achieved due to the merger amount to \$2 million at most; instead the costs of the merger transition are themselves contributing to higher taxes.

Taxes were frozen last year, which was year 1 after the merger, until the situation became clearer. Now the council of the Halifax regional municipality is debating how much taxes will increase in year 2 when a new tax structure is also being introduced.

The council has proposed that residential property taxes in many areas of the new merged municipality increase, on average, by nearly 10% this year alone. In fact the council's proposal calls for average property taxes to increase in most areas, even though plans also call for reduced education budgets in the urban core.

This month the municipality is conducting an advertising campaign which modestly states, and I quote, "Establishing a fair and equitable tax structure is a major challenge."

The most prominently promised saving was in the cost of the council itself, because four mayors and councils would be replaced by one. Residents were promised fewer politicians and that the merger would get government off their back.

However, the one council for a much larger municipality is costing just about as much as the combined cost of the four previous councils. Councillors need much greater support services to be able to serve the much larger number of constituents they now represent. The mayor's office is much larger than any of the four predecessors, again due to the greater size and complexity of the operation.

Higher service levels in outlying areas and equalizing the salaries and wages of people doing the same work are two other amalgamation-related forces that are starting to drive up costs.

It may be noteworthy that the Halifax merger was accompanied by a major realignment of provincial and municipal responsibilities, which itself is contributing to the rising property taxes following the merger. It has been suggested that one purpose of merger was to disguise the downloading of provincial costs to the municipal taxpayer, and I note with interest —

**Mr Colle:** Not here.

**Mr Gerretsen:** It can't happen here.

**Ms McDonough:** I note with interest today in the Ottawa Citizen that there is an article by Andrew Sancton, a highly esteemed professor in public administration with particular expertise in municipal administration, suggesting that the very same thing may be true of the proposed merger here in Toronto.

The third point I want to make is that the merger was imposed from above, without local approval and therefore without the necessary community-based support and participation. The Halifax merger was not requested by any of the municipalities. It was not approved by referendum or by plebiscite.

The one vote in which a Halifax municipal merger was on the agenda was the provincial general election of 1993. The only political party then in favour of a Halifax municipal merger, the Conservative Party, received their lowest popular vote in almost 40 years and barely held on to one of the 17 provincial ridings within the region. The Liberals and New Democratic Party, who campaigned against the merger, won 16 seats.

The provincial government's decision to impose the merger came as a shock. There was no formal advance notice and little forewarning. The bill was rammed through the Legislature within three months of its announcement. Citizens had little opportunity to study the plan. Public opinion polls, for what they're worth, showed that opposition to the merger process ranged from 70% to 90%.

Each neighbourhood and community that is now part of the Halifax regional municipality finds that decisions affecting them are being made by a council composed

primarily of representatives who are unfamiliar with their neighbourhoods or communities.

Some forecast that decision-making will become a series of tradeoffs, pushing costs still higher. Others fear that the policies which proved appropriate for the various communities, such as heritage protection, for example, in the historic areas of Halifax, will be swept aside by a council which, by nature, has a majority who are not knowledgeable about the particular aspect of community-based issues.

It will take at least two more years before all the evidence is in on the Halifax merger. It is already clear, however, that the transition was very expensive and that it produced cost pressures that must be dealt with for years to come.

What can Ontario learn from this recent experience in Nova Scotia? I leave you with one question: Is it worthwhile to destroy local representation and to massively disrupt local government when higher costs and higher taxes are the predictable result?

Metro Halifax has 330,846 residents. Metro Toronto has 2.3 million. US consultant Wendell Cox has shown that US cities with a population of more than one million cost 18% more per capita to operate than cities with populations between 100,000 and 500,000. He shows a much greater spending gap, on average 152% per capita, between amalgamated cities of the same size.

The bottom line is that an imposed merger will likely cost Toronto taxpayers even more than a provincially imposed merger is costing the taxpayers of Halifax.

I just want to say in the final analysis, and perhaps most importantly, I think the biggest cost and the worst cost to the citizens of Toronto will be in the lesser democracy and the lessened accountability. At a time when there is a genuine crisis of confidence in public officials and in government, it seems to me this is a cost that cannot be afforded.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, ladies and gentlemen; especially not during a presentation, please.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Ms McDonough. It will be the record for a long-distance visitor coming before us here these five weeks.

Let me just start with a couple of the points in your report on which we've had slightly different information coming from the Nova Scotia government itself. Our minister, Al Leach, met with the minister responsible. They said their biggest regret was not having trustees in place who would have ensured that when things such as the severance packets were negotiated for the 144 people who were let go, there were controls in place to guarantee that it was done by a more fiscally responsible standard and you wouldn't have had a situation where people were paid severance packets and then immediately rehired by the new city government. Have you heard similar concerns down in Halifax?

**Ms McDonough:** Yes, those have been concerns, but let me say it's also typical of this government, which rammed through the legislation without consultation and against the strenuous objection of the citizens, that what they're interested in talking to you about is how they

might have saved more money instead of whether the citizens have actually benefited.

**Mr Gilchrist:** It's my understanding that the chamber of commerce, which had been one of the proponents of amalgamation, is solidly on side. Their quote was, "So far, so good." They didn't believe it was appropriate to have all four municipalities, including Bedford, which for those here in Ontario who probably aren't aware has a population of about 12,000, maintaining separate economic development offices. They have their own industrial park. There was a competition in the community against each other about the siting of things like a Price Club when you've got a huge opportunity — I would ask you whether you would agree with this statement — to develop Halifax region as a major transportation hub.

**Ms McDonough:** Yes, I would agree. The same point needs to be made here, which is surely that there are not just two options, the status quo or this draconian legislation. Surely there is an option to provide for better coordination around such matters as those you've identified — economic development, transportation planning — while you also preserve at the more local level the democracy that is very much prized by the citizenry.

The other point I've alluded to in my presentation is that the very concerns that have been borne out in the Halifax situation will be even more serious in an area like Toronto which is so much more populous.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Would you agree with me that there is one very important distinction with the nature of the Halifax amalgamation, given that you've got a very developed urban core, the Dartmouth and Halifax area, but that two thirds of the geography in the new city are rural or relatively undeveloped areas, whereas Metro Toronto, from one end to the other, is a totally urban area? Would you at least concede that part of the inspiration for the amalgamation was the opportunity to have rural land into which the city will grow in the future? 1020

**Ms McDonough:** I've no trouble agreeing with that, but I don't see what it has to do with justifying plowing ahead with this legislation. It seems to me the argument could be even more strenuous against the proposed Toronto amalgamation simply because of the massive numbers involved and the almost certain inaccessibility and lesser accountability that is going to obtain in the instance of such large government units.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Leaving the population numbers aside though, there is a commonality in terms of the service delivery all across Metro, which was not the case in the new city of Halifax where right now it has been issues of the redistribution of services which have left many of the councillors in areas like Bedford to complain about how many dollars are being spent in their community now today. It's the balancing of the rural and urban differences that is creating a lot of the funding challenges, as is the case in every amalgamation where an urban core takes on rural land around it. Is that not one of the challenges facing Halifax today, to balance the rural and urban needs?

**Ms McDonough:** Yes, it is one of the challenges, but I guess I would simply restate that to use that as an

argument to justify going ahead with the Toronto amalgamation is just —

**Mr Gilchrist:** I'm asking you just to make a distinction between the two.

**Ms McDonough:** I think the other thing, if I understand your point, is that the argument you make simply underscores the point made by Professor Andrew Sancton when he said, under the title "Convenient Political Cover," that "Amalgamation can provide convenient political cover for further reducing the size of municipal bureaucracy," and goes on really to talk about how there seems to be two things going on here and it really surely helps to disguise the downloading that the provincial government is doing on the municipalities, which is one set of phenomena happening at the same time that the government is plowing ahead with this amalgamation. I think it's very convenient for the government of the day that it causes great confusion in terms of tracking how much of the damage is being caused by which of these two phenomena, but it doesn't justify going ahead with either one.

**The Chair:** We've come to the end of the allotted time. I want to thank you, Ms McDonough, for coming forward this morning.

**Ms McDonough:** Thank you for the opportunity to appear.

**The Chair:** Would Michael Thomas please come forward.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Chair, Guy Hunter is not next? Please explain that.

**The Chair:** He's cancelled. Michael Thomas, please.

**Mr Marchese:** Michael Thomas is here somewhere.

**The Chair:** Is Joan Doiron available? We'll have Joan first, and then if Michael's back, we'll have Michael.

#### JOAN DOIRON

**The Chair:** Welcome to the committee this morning.

**Ms Joan Doiron:** My name is Joan Doiron. I started my comments this morning with your coat of arms. I'm actually not sure how to say it in Latin — maybe we could get some help from the Romans who are in the room later on — but it sounded pretty good when I heard what it meant. Audi alteram partem; I'll let somebody else translate that. I think you had it translated for you.

**Mr Colle:** Listen to the other side.

**Ms Doiron:** Yes, and I thought that was neat. They had neat ways of saying that back there in the Roman times. It's more or less the essence of what I have to say to you.

Actually, I thought our government was with that statement, because look at a couple of things they said in the CSR, as we call it:

"Let's reinvent the way government works, to make it work for people."

"We will work closely with municipalities to ensure that any actions we take will not result in increases to local property taxes. We want to ensure that municipalities do everything possible to deliver services more efficiently."

"We don't have time in Ontario for a sterile debate using the outdated labels of 'left' and 'right.'"

"We know there are many more sound ideas for making government more efficient.... We will sit down with municipalities to discuss ways of reducing government bureaucracy with an eye to eliminating waste as well as unfair downloading by the province."

"But how we get there will be discussed in partnership with all Ontarians. This is the Common Sense Revolution.... No hidden agenda."

That's what you said in 1994.

I had difficulty finding a copy of the CSR. My MPP's office didn't have a copy; I guess they weren't supposed to have one. The receptionist referred me to the PC Party. Then I was told it was out of print. I persisted, since I was profoundly puzzled by Bill 103 and what might have been its origins. I had to persist since this dry bill was promising or seemed to be promising to turn my stable life as a 60-year resident of Metro Toronto into chaos. Finally I found a copy of the CSR at the Metro library. Having been a former librarian myself, I should have known to go there in the first place. Perhaps I discovered why it is difficult to obtain.

#### 1030

These quotes certainly give the sense of a government that is working with Ontarians, discussing key issues, having non-partisan debates about greater efficiencies, eliminating waste and stopping downloading on municipalities. It doesn't sound too bad, does it? I could even perhaps vote for a lot of that stuff myself. But there seems to be little relationship — and I think it's been pointed out to you in spades in the hundreds of deputations you've heard — between Bill 103 and the CSR.

Bill 103 removes my rights to democratic representation through my elected local councillors. Let me tell you that it's my local councillors whom I work with day by day in all kinds of issues, big and small. Key decisions will be made in the new proposed 103 system by appointees who meet in private. It's bad enough that they're in control, but for them to meet in private is outrageous. This is hardly "no hidden agenda." Why is this being done? What have Metro residents done to deserve such shoddy treatment? Bill 103 requires me to pay ever-increasing property taxes while removing from me any control over how these taxes are spent. I can't help but compare the French and American revolutions and the Canadian rebellions of 1837. It seems a bit ridiculous to be making those comparisons, but it just comes right out at you.

The CSR promised no unfair downloading; Bill 103 is a recipe for exactly that. CSR suggested a partnership with all of us; Bill 103 sets up a highly polarized situation — us versus them — with Metro residents as the enemy. I've always thought of myself as a pretty law-abiding, active citizen and as a teacher and parent very active in a lot of issues in the city for many years. I just can't believe that you hate me so much, or you want me to become a criminal, I guess, and then you could lock me up. You can't mean that. I take that back.

No government can rule without the consent of its people. After all, 72% of Ontario did not vote for the current government. Lots of people stayed home. This means that you must represent all of us. Key decisions must be made with full participation of those affected. Of

course, members of the Legislature must use this democratic forum to listen to each other — see your Latin motto — make amendments and arrive at conclusions only after full debate. Your committee must do the honourable step of letting Bill 103 die here. It would be a true example of democracy and I think a sign that you're truly courageous people if you did that. This does not mean status quo. That's been said repeatedly to you. I don't want status quo. It means that your committee should make recommendations about how needed municipal changes should be made.

We are interested in efficiency and reducing costs. This is precisely why smaller units are much better. Your own earlier studies indicated your support for strong local government, which is much more cost-efficient. Actually, that's what I always thought was a Tory position: that you want decentralization, you want local control. That's why many years ago even I voted, and had signs up, for David Crombie. Megacities mean mega-cost, a police state mentality — witness the 50% of the current budget at Metro which is now going to police — with little citizen participation and lots of fear.

Just to give you a good example of efficiency, I am the current chair of the Better Transportation Coalition of Ontario, a group which supports cost-efficient ways of moving goods and people; that is walking, cycling, transit, rail. One of our groups is the Coalition on Sensible Transportation, based in the 905 area. CSR asked citizens for ideas on reducing costs. We took you at your word. COST — and I've enclosed that document for you — responded in 1995 and 1996 with several letters to the province about how many millions could be saved on such projects as the 407 highway.

We have yet to receive replies to our suggestions. We had press conferences here at Queen's Park about highway costs and safety, but we still have not heard a response from your minister to our concerns. I would suggest that is actually where you can go to save a lot of personal and public money for people. This well-served, transit-friendly place in downtown Toronto that has bicycle lanes and is really pleasant for walking saves me thousands. That's how your people in Ontario can save personal money and you can save public money. Please look at it. I haven't had a response, as I said.

We want to work with you to reduce costs in the province — financial costs, environmental costs, community costs. With the Premier we want to "hope for a better future for our children." He said that in the CSR. This is why you must let Bill 103 die. It insults us and our democracy. It cries out for a democratic replacement.

**The Chair:** You've exhausted your allotted time. Thank you for coming forward to the committee today.

MICHAEL THOMAS

**The Chair:** Would Michael Thomas come forward. Good morning, Mr Thomas. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Michael Thomas:** Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you this morning. My name is Michael Thomas. I was born in Ontario. I grew up in Ontario. I went to the University of Toronto and I've worked in architecture, urban design and community development for the last 30 years. The reason I'm here this morning is

because Bill 103 is in direct violation of the Habitat Agenda. This is a 241-page agreement signed by Canada in Istanbul last June at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. The government of Canada committed all Canadians to supporting the principle of decentralized, local decision-making with full citizen participation as the indisputable foundation on which to build local and global sustainable development.

I'm a strong believer in local sustainable economic development. As past founding president of TEDRA, the Toronto East Downtown Residents' Association, I authored a 182-page report called Healing the Neighbourhood, and we published it last October. In the report, residents define "healthy neighbourhood" and we detail 81 recommendations to sustain and nourish our east downtown neighbourhood. This report is the result of years and thousands of hours of monthly neighbourhood council meetings attended by politicians, police, planners, developers, business owners and residents.

The Metro Toronto level of government has continually frustrated TEDRA. Last Wednesday you listened to David Wood describe Metro level services provided by police and business licensers in our neighbourhood. He described those services as poor, insensitive and unresponsive.

In the November 1994 municipal elections the city of Toronto ran a referendum to ask voters, "Are you in favour of eliminating the Metro level of government?" and 58.1% responded yes.

#### 1040

Before the provincial election in June 1995, the Mike Harris task force held hearings across Metro Toronto and published the Trimmer report in April 1995. This report cautioned against "false economies of scale which in smaller operations are subsumed into larger ones for the sake of efficiency; they get bogged down in bureaucratic growth." Your report recommended eliminating Metro and establishing a GTA services board.

During the 1995 election campaign Premier Harris and the Conservative Party published the Common Sense Revolution, a booklet of promises. Mike Harris promised, "If I do not live up to anything I have promised...I will resign." Voters believed him and elected him Premier.

Following the election, the Golden report of the GTA task force was tabled in January 1996, and in accordance with its findings, Metro Toronto council passed a motion in April urging the province to end Metro and move its larger services up to a GTA coordinating board and the rest down to strengthen the six local municipalities.

However, in spite of all this, on December 17, Bill 103 landed like a bomb planted to destroy all momentum towards the GTA board. Instead, the seven Toronto-area councils were to be amalgamated into one..

A financial study from KPMG was immediately presented as proof for cost savings even though they disclaim their own report. The same day, the city of Toronto released an analysis of the KPMG report by Andrew Sancton. He found the comparison of costs across the six municipalities fascinating and lamented that amalgamation would destroy any opportunity to benchmark efficiencies and copy innovations between the six different cities. He also doubted there would be the projected

\$100-million saving in duplication costs and found it to be an insignificant 1.8% of total spending.

Two days after Bill 103 was introduced, I received a flyer in the mail from the government of Ontario announcing the new city of Toronto, a change for the better, as though Bill 103 was already law. The Speaker of the Legislature has pronounced this document to be in contempt of parliamentary procedure.

Bill 103, if passed, gives the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing total control over the seven old councils and over the one to-be-elected new council. A board of three trustees makes final decisions on everything, is exempt from damages caused through neglect and cannot be taken to court for anything.

If amalgamation is such a great idea, why is it necessary to suspend democratic rights and freedoms? My father and millions of Canadian men and women went to war to fight totalitarian and Fascist regimes.

I'm really curious about the inclusion of neighbourhood committees in Bill 103. Is this a muddled after-thought that local delivery of services and accountability is really the way to go? Except that even the function and method of choosing committee members gets to be determined by the new council, possibly still under the control of the minister.

You should know that there are already over 100 neighbourhood organizations across Metro, and none of them would ever hold themselves accountable to any council. We have to work with all levels of government to hold municipal, provincial and federal policies and services accountable in our neighbourhood.

On January 10 the city of Toronto released a study by Wendell Cox comparing the amalgamated model with a local city/GTA model. He showed that the megacity would be less efficient, less democratic and more expensive. So why a megacity? The answer: mega-week. The government couldn't find the \$3 billion more you still need to cut from spending to cut income taxes 30%. No wonder we didn't get the Minister of Finance's promised financial statement last November, and no wonder you seek to destroy local councils and school boards in order to seize assets and reserve funds.

Ignoring David Crombie's Who Does What panel's final report dated December 23, a report you commissioned in May 1996, in which he carefully maintains an even exchange in disentangling municipal and provincial revenue and spending programs, the government, in a blitzkrieg series of announcements starting on January 13, downloaded a long list of provincial responsibilities on to municipalities: transit, roads, social housing, libraries, public health, ambulance, special care homes, social assistance programs, child care, long-term health care. The list goes on and on.

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto has estimated each business in Metro will face a \$7,800 rise in property taxes. It predicts a mass exodus. The latest net downloading costs are estimated at \$1 billion annually, or about \$1,000 for each residential property tax bill. Brilliant. Cut income tax 30%, raise property tax 40%, and let the local councils take the heat for slashing former provincial services in a desperate attempt to keep property taxes down.

This government has cut services. You've stripped labour, equity and environmental protection laws; you are offering public institutions for sale; and now, last week, you launched a \$50-million advertising campaign to tell the world that Ontario is open for business. You've set it up so private interests can make unholy profits on human misery and on our common good without government interference.

A word of warning: In this month's Atlantic Monthly magazine is an essay entitled "The Capitalist Threat." George Soros, an American who made a fortune in the financial markets, writes:

"Laissez-faire capitalism and the belief in the magic of the marketplace must be tempered by the recognition of a common interest and the need to sustain the values of an open society. An open society is a complicated, sophisticated structure that requires deliberate effort to bring into existence and institutions to protect it. Too much competition and too little cooperation can cause intolerable inequities and instability."

The United Nations has called Toronto the most ethnically diverse city in the world and one of the most livable. This high quality of life has been achieved by open and efficient local government. It will be an international humiliation for all Canadians to lose this.

I ask you to slow down and back up. Keep your promise, as you heard from Joan, not to unfairly download services. Keep your promise to sit down with municipalities —

**The Chair:** Mr Thomas?

**Mr Thomas:** I'll just finish in two seconds.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry to interrupt, but we're already at 11 minutes, so you're going to have to wrap up with the last couple of lines, please.

**Mr Thomas:** Keep your promise to resign if you break these promises. Withdraw Bill 103. Continue responsible negotiation for revenue and service change in Ontario. Passing Bill 103 will be a violation of your oath of allegiance to the Queen to uphold the democratic rights of all citizens. Passing Bill 103 will be a declaration of war on the old Toronto cities. In order to avoid financial ruin and oblivion, these cities will have no recourse but to declare a state of emergency as outlined in Bill 103, section 10(3)(b), and seize authority from the minister. In order to put an end to such an emergency, your government will have to rescind Bill 103 or resign. I trust you will have the common sense to avoid throwing us all into such total chaos.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation.

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DOUGLAS HOLYDAY

**The Chair:** Would Doug Holyday please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Douglas Holyday:** Thank you very much for inviting me to appear. I guess I'm here in two instances actually: I'm representing council and I'm going to present council's position as it's been prepared, but as you might have heard, sometimes I have differences of opinion with those people and I have a few comments of

my own that I'd like to make. So I'll start with the presentation as prepared.

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the concerns and recommendations of Etobicoke council. These concerns have been voiced by a number of residents who are very much involved in the ongoing review of Bill 103.

In one of these hearings you were advised that Etobicoke had a meeting relating to the referendum on Bill 103 which 11 people attended. In fairness, I should point out that that was not a public meeting, that it really was a regular meeting of council, a committee of the whole where we allowed deputants to speak. I might point out that the first two deputants were former Liberal candidates who came in, and they were speaking about the referendum and the need to have it. I guess the other nine people who were there were their supporters.

Etobicoke residents are concerned about the issue, which was evident at an earlier publicized meeting on the megacity issue where there were about 200 residents. We are continuing to hold public meetings to educate the public and to encourage them to make their own determination with regard to Bill 103. These meetings were well attended. The latest one was on Tuesday, February 11, and again there were about 200 people there. I think this conveys the impression that the citizens of Etobicoke are very concerned about this issue.

In addressing Bill 103, I believe I speak for all members of council and the public when I say that we are frustrated with the lack of information to which we must respond. The proposed legislation does not provide us with any information about the form of the new city government and how it will function. This information will only be determined if the legislation is adopted during the short period of time between that date and the end of the year. The complexities of building a new government from the ground up and the need for thoughtful consideration of a number of critically important issues during such a short time frame presupposes a limited chance for success. Again, I mention that's the comments of my council.

Unfortunately, we find ourselves forced at this time to comment on legislation which outlines the shape of the new government but does not offer any substance in terms of how it will actually function. In reviewing the government bill and supporting documents, we do not find any solid information to substantiate the government's claims that the new city will be more efficient, more responsive, provide more jobs or be effective to operate. The government has not provided a white paper in support of the legislation as might be expected.

Furthermore, much of the government's own information is contradictory. For example, the backgrounder released from the Legislature speaks of community councils to reflect community needs and assigns them some responsibility to approve zoning amendment applications, minor variances, subdivisions and community planning and engineering standards. Although I now understand that legislation will be introduced to deal with community councils in the next few weeks, Bill 103 itself does not provide for these crucial parts of the new structure.

I would like to make it clear that Etobicoke has always supported the restructuring of service delivery and the reorganization of government responsibilities where this will lead to increased efficiency and savings. This part I do agree with. Since 1988, the city payroll has been reduced by 20%, for a total cost reduction of \$20 million. Restructuring and downsizing have reduced staff by more than 400 positions, and the number of city departments has been reduced from 10 to seven. Etobicoke's portion of the tax bill has not increased — counting this year, which will happen — in five years, and the city has reduced its general government expenses by almost 11% during the last three years.

Etobicoke has been a leader in contracting out municipal services where this has been shown to provide better service at less expense to our taxpayers. The other area municipalities and Metro Toronto have made similar reductions to achieve more cost-effective government.

The city of Etobicoke has consistently supported measures which will make government more effective and responsive. In the city's brief to the Golden task force, council supported the downsizing of the Metro level of government with the following comments: Services which respond to the community needs, such as parks and roads, should be transferred to local government; services which respond to universal social programs, such as welfare and possibly education, should be transferred to the province; and services which are not consistent with boundaries, such as police, homes for the aged, garbage disposal, recycling, water supply, pollution control and, I would suggest, economic development should be retained by Metro.

Etobicoke supports giving the area municipalities financial and administrative responsibility for local services over time, including ambulance services, licensing, planning, regional parks, roads and traffic regulations and the collection of fines.

Etobicoke also supports a regional GTA board structure with political representation by population from local municipalities. We believe you do not have to adopt such a radical proposal to clarify local government responsibility and improve efficiencies.

The minister has said that the issue of amalgamation has been studied for decades and that the current legislation merely finalizes the lengthy review. In fact, many of the past studies, such as the Planning Act reform, dealt with amalgamation only in an indirect way. The most recent studies have dealt with restructuring only in the bigger context of governance issues across the greater Toronto area.

We believe the current amalgamation proposal is fundamentally flawed because it does not provide for an effective integration of government functions within the GTA region. The GTA level is the most effective level in which to coordinate a number of services, such as overseeing urban development patterns, the planning and development supporting hard and soft services, and environmental issues. It is the most effective level at which to undertake international economic development and to equitably distribute the benefits of economic growth. Yet the current legislation does not deal with governance issues at the GTA level. It will create a

government within Metropolitan Toronto which we believe will be too large to deal responsively with local issues while being too small to effectively deal with issues across the Toronto region. Total amalgamation of both levels of local governments and Metro does virtually nothing to deal with the broader issues affecting growth and development throughout the GTA region.

The minister has indicated that amalgamation will result in more jobs in Metro. We believe that investment in the local economy requires the certainty of a predictable outcome. Those who are considering investing money need to be assured of a reasonably predictable future. If the amalgamation proposals are adopted, government structures will not change overnight. Given the enormous task of reorganizing service delivery and consolidating such things as the thousands of bylaws currently in place across Metro, we believe the transitional period will stretch on for a number of years.

The government has also been largely silent on the monumental task of amalgamating the 40 collective agreements currently in force. Standardization of wage rates and benefits, negotiating costs and retraining of staff will not occur overnight. To imply that this will be in effect by January 1, 1998, is unreasonable and reinforces the image of a local government in flux. The political and regulatory processes will also be in transition. Taken as a whole, we believe this transition period will be one of great uncertainty for business. In the short term, we believe investment and job creation are likely to decline as businesses will unwillingly gamble their investments on such a shifting environment.

The government's own estimates of potential savings are vague and limited by a number of qualifiers. The consultants take great care to emphasize that the actual savings will depend on careful management of the transition process. I note that the minister has recently been quoted as saying these actual savings may now be less than initially estimated by roughly 50%. Whatever the number turns out to be, it can only be determined at the end of the transition process after the estimates have been done. For now, we are asked to accept the government's estimate as the rationale for amalgamation.

The government suggests that the centralization of management functions and other operating efficiencies will generate these savings. The government's estimate suggests a 10% reduction in total employment after amalgamation. That of course is of the municipal forces. However, centralized management will require a local presence to deliver services across the city. The new city won't keep all its parks crews and snowplows downtown. While it may be true that the responsibility for delivering services may become clearer, the bureaucratic structure which actually delivers the service may not significantly change.

The government has suggested that a fundamental reason for amalgamating the area municipalities is to make the political process more open and accountable to residents. The legislation currently provides for a council comprised of 44 members and neighbourhood committees advising each councillor. Without the community council's ability to share some parts of the workload, it's difficult to imagine that one councillor can effectively

deal with the volume of work currently undertaken by seven.

For example, each of the area municipalities currently reviews development applications, official plan and zoning amendments and committee-of-adjustment applications. The Planning Act requires that these matters be heard by council or a committee of council established under the act. The land use committees or their equivalent in the area municipalities currently meet for a total of three and a half days every two weeks to deal with development applications. More than 180 official plan and zoning applications were dealt with in 1995 alone. Assuming that half of the 180 official plan and zoning applications require a public meeting under the Planning Act, the council will be required to hold more than 90 public meetings, or at least three meetings every two weeks throughout the year, just to deal with these applications. There were also 385 site plan control applications and 2,600 variances processed by the area municipalities in 1995.

How will one council or one delegated planning committee deal with this volume of work while remaining responsive to the needs of the communities? How will a council ever find the time to listen to and consider the views of the residents?

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We believe the workload alone will lead to the standardization of the development review processes, the implementation of uniform property standard provisions and a loss of sensitivity to local issues and identity. Community planning and the many other issues which will face the new council will decline as one size fits all.

Since smaller councils develop more intimate knowledge of the issues which are important to the community and are more accountable to the electorate, we believe it would be more difficult to achieve consensus within a large council on important issues. Clearly, the new council will need some mechanism to stay in touch with its residents and businesses. However, the community council structure seems to us in many ways to simply replicate the current division of responsibilities on many issues between Metro and the local municipalities.

We do not believe that having community councils and the city council with different responsibilities will be any less confusing and more efficient to residents and businesses than the current structure. The legislation provides for the appointment of neighbourhood committees which will advise directly elected councillors. Since the councillors will essentially be dealing with roughly twice the number of constituents as they currently represent, they will very likely be unable to deal directly with their electorate. They will come to rely on their neighbourhood committee representatives to present the views and concerns of the residents and businesses.

When an issue arises, a resident will presumably have to appear before the neighbourhood committee to obtain support, then appear before the community council for a recommendation, and finally appear before the city council for a final decision. This does not indicate that the total amalgamation of the local municipalities will achieve a more responsive and accountable political structure.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present council's views. However, the minister's statements that the bill will not be substantially amended have given cause for some reservation about this committee's ability or willingness to recommend meaningful changes to the legislation.

If Bill 103 is supported by this committee, we would ask (1) that the transition to a megacity be transparent to the residents; (2) that services, including development control, the issuing of building permits, libraries and recreation programs, continue to be delivered in a local facility; and (3) that any structure proposed should maximize service response and minimize time and travel costs for both consumers and staff.

Once a decision in favour of amalgamation is made, it will be very difficult to undo. We believe the government owes us the time to evaluate other options more completely. Let's get it right the first time and not assume we might get it right as we go along.

I'd like to add some things to that. My own thoughts on the governance of the Metropolitan Toronto region were originally that I preferred the double-direct type of regional council. The only thing I thought was that the regional council should be somewhat bigger than it is now. What I envisioned was that it would take in Mississauga, Vaughan, Pickering and some of the urbanized areas around Metropolitan Toronto which I believe are sharing in a lot of the things the taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto pay for. I think when we initially started this exercise the thing was to try to eliminate the hole in the doughnut, or to make a situation where that didn't occur, and to level the playing field.

In Etobicoke we've made it very hard. We, first off, have a large majority of the commercial-industrial tax base in Metropolitan Toronto, but we are bounded on one side by Mississauga and on the north side by Vaughan. Our geographic situation is that we're north and south, but narrow, and so it was very easy for our businesses to transfer over to Mississauga. Consequently, we lost a lot. We had a lot of old industry that needed to have new locations. Of course, off they went to places like Mississauga. Part of the reason, though, was the tax situation. All the mayors were pushing to have this level playing field.

That brings us to the situation of taxation of the new megacity, if in fact that comes about. It can't be done in any way that would increase taxes in the Metropolitan Toronto area, thereby defeating the very reason we started to do this. I would ask you to give consideration to the fact that whenever any changes are made in the taxation system, they come out to be revenue-neutral and certainly don't put us in a worse situation than when we started here.

I mentioned this double-direct election to a regional council. I also envision that the local councils would be downsized, that the responsibilities done by the municipal governments would be turned over to the government most suited and most able to do that and provide the service in the most economic and efficient way.

Also, things like the school board might be given consideration to be combined with council so it could be run the way we run our boards of health and our library

boards, with a combination of citizens and councillors, and thereby help reduce the cost and get some of the efficiencies you're trying to get with the megacity, where you're trying to get accountability on fewer people.

I guess, unfortunately, the views I have expressed have been considered but certainly aren't being put forward.

I'm also concerned that if we do go to the megacity, the local identity is going to suffer a bit. I come from Long Branch and my dad still lives in Long Branch. That was taken over by Etobicoke in 1967. I guess it was a difficult time for the people who lived there at the time, but in the end Long Branch is still Long Branch and it really has operated very similarly to what it did.

The thing with Etobicoke is that it's not Long Branch. Long Branch had 10,000 people; Etobicoke has 320,000 people. We have a lot of community things that go on there that centre around a focal point. In a lot of cases the focal point, I believe, is the mayor and the council. We have our Etobicoke Sports Hall of Fame. It's one of the best in the province and maybe in the country. People are always coming to us, asking us how we did it and how does it operate and how could they formulate something along those lines. I'm afraid that if there isn't a council thrust behind a program like this, it might fall by the wayside.

We have other things. We have ecumenical breakfasts built around our churches. It's called the Mayor's Ecumenical Breakfasts. Those people are concerned that if there's no focal point, how is this going to continue? We have the Mayor's Tournament for Heart and Stroke golf. If there's no focal point, will that continue? We have Arts Etobicoke and the Mayor's Luncheon for the Arts. There's a whole host of things that function around council and around the mayor and that official spot. Of course, there are all the requests for ribbon-cuttings and anniversary attendances and so on, where they want an official representing the community to be there. I think one mayor throughout this whole region is going to have a very difficult job trying to ever fulfil those responsibilities.

Under the system that I think has been set up, and I haven't seen it in Bill 103 but it certainly was mentioned by the minister when he made the announcement, he proposes there will be six districts and in those districts there'll be seven or eight wards. Those councillors elected in those wards are going to appoint one of their own to be the chair of that division, and that person will then sit on the executive body of the new city. I think that person should be elected and that person, if elected, would have the support of the community to carry on those things I've just mentioned.

Anybody who's running would be free to run for that spot as well. I suggest it could be done with a double ballot. The residents would be asked to tick off who their councillor was going to be. They would then be asked to tick off any of those who have declared they want to run for chair. Of course, if you're going to run for chair, you have to run throughout the whole area, as well as in the area you have to be represented. That way, accountability comes to the system.

If it's left up to appointments, I could see where three councillors might get together. If they could find a fourth

one who's not interested in being the chair to support them, they could take a turn at a year each. It'll be insignificant to the community. It would be something like the chair of our administration committee or our general committee or any of our committees at council now. People, unless they appear before them, don't even know who they are. It wouldn't carry the same authority or respect in the community and enable that person to be able to continue these things that make up our local identities.

I would just ask the government, if it's going to go ahead with this, to please give serious consideration to allowing that district chairperson to be elected. If you did that, it would go somewhat towards keeping local identities intact and even soften the changeover.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Holyday. We have a little over three minutes per caucus for questions.

**Mr Holyday:** Oh, I had one other thing I meant to do before you start the questions, another thing I was concerned with. We know the government's side of this. They've made it quite apparent. We know councils all over the world here have put proposals forward for this new scenario. But what I don't know is what are the scenarios put forward by the other two parties: the opposition and the third party. What I'd like to do is invite the leaders of the third party and the opposition to come to our council and tell us what they want.

We all know the status quo isn't acceptable. There's too much government, there are too many politicians, there's too much bureaucracy, duplication, inefficiencies, everything you want to name, so changes have to be made.

These people have an idea. We don't all agree with the idea, but I want to know what your ideas are, I want to know what your parties' ideas are, and I think the public should know what your parties' ideas are. I would like to invite you to come — as a matter of fact I can even give you a date. It would be a week Monday at 10 o'clock in the morning. We'll give you as much time as you need and you can appear before the committee of the whole of Etobicoke council and tell us what your parties want to do, what you people would like to see.

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**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Holyday. We're now stretching our three minutes for each caucus.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much, Mayor Holyday, for coming. I think you've made a very good point because it's very difficult in opposition ever to get — as you know, the print media has been boosting the megacity from day one and we haven't had our two cents' worth, but basically I think as Liberals what we think is essentially what you're getting towards, the system of double-direct where Metro gets folded into the GTA, but you've got to have independent competing municipalities about approximate size throughout the GTA. It's basically the Golden-McCallion approach. I will be there on your invitation to further expand on that.

The question I have for you is what you're proposing in terms of this elected community council chairman, whatever — and it's not in this bill, as you know. This is just conjecture. We haven't seen anything. Aren't you basically trying to go back to what exists now where you

need someone locally who people can identify with and who can be involved in local issues, and at the same time connected with the bigger issues? Aren't they just trying to reinvent something that already exists? Shouldn't we basically just adjust and make the corrections to what we have?

**Mr Holyday:** I think you're only talking about one position here. What they're talking about, I guess, is blending the whole bureaucracy. I'm talking about a way to at least try to save some of the local identity, save some of the ongoing things the people in the community care about and give them a way to have a focal point to address their needs.

A lot of people, if they want to open a beauty salon, want the mayor there to come and open it. I don't know that that requires having separate bureaucracies, but it does require somebody who they're suggesting is going to be in place anyway, but I'm suggesting it would be done in a more community-oriented way where the community picks that person and they would have the responsibility of doing these official things in their area.

**Mr Colle:** The other thing is that the government keeps on saying: "The municipalities just offer marginal services. Most of Metro's services are amalgamated." They use this 72% figure, essentially forgetting that most of the 72% Metro spends is provincial dollars. Would you like to comment — you've been at Metro, you've been locally — in terms of what the local service provisions are and the duties locally compared to the sort of understanding and the impact on local communities about the Metro and the local level?

**Mr Holyday:** I think that in our community the people do appreciate the local service. We're going through some difficult times right now and I can tell you things are changing. When we first started taking phone calls about amalgamation, the calls were at least three to one opposing it. I can tell you they're not anywhere near that now. I don't know if that has to do with the ongoing situation in Etobicoke or whether that's commonplace throughout Metro.

We put forward the mayors' plan, which was to take the services and try to spread them around the municipalities and we would divvy up the cost. Scarborough would be in charge of one aspect and Etobicoke would have another one and so on. That, I thought, might have been workable at the time we presented the program, but once we got into this debate about having a referendum and all the different ideas that came forward on the referendum, it made me wonder, boy, if the mayors and the councils can't agree even on how to hold a referendum, it would be very difficult for them to agree on how to split up all the services.

**Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt):** Mayor Holyday, you asked a fair question in terms of what our positions are as opposition parties. I think it's fair to tell you that we don't have a fully complete position, in part because we don't believe this is the kind of issue on which you can just overnight come up with a position and say this is what it should be, but we have some basic principles we would follow.

The first is that, as both the Golden report and the Crombie report found, what we should be doing, first of

all, is addressing the issue of the GTA as a city region. I think they are complimentary to what you were saying about creating that body, probably not just as a service board but eventually as a form of government that would become the regional government that would be responsible for those services that need to be governed and coordinated at that level, and then within that looking at the local municipalities in terms of what changes, if any, should be made both in terms of delivery of services and even the question around boundaries.

That's sort of the context we would set, but clearly I want to emphasize that we would not do it in this kind of haphazard way of rushing through for the sake of meeting some crazy deadline that's been set by the government on its own without any sense of what it's doing. Maybe if I can go from that into a question —

**Mr Holyday:** I thought that was a question. I was going to answer it.

**Mr Silipo:** Go ahead.

**Mr Holyday:** It's difficult to accept that it's been overnight. When this started, I think your party was in the government at that time, maybe two years ago or better now; that was with the Golden report. I recall that even during the last municipal election, this was a big issue then, and shortly thereafter I recall the mayors' meeting with Alan Tonks, and then we met with people from your government and staff people too. As a result of that and as a result of discussions with the board of trade and others, the Golden commission was set up. That certainly wasn't overnight; that's gone on for quite some time. I guess I am a little surprised that there isn't any position coming forward from your party that —

**Mr Silipo:** But you'll recall that the Golden commission, under our government, was also going to be given more time to get into some of these other issues. It's clear that had we been the government, it would have continued and we would have dealt with the results of those recommendations. I'm not telling you anything differently on that score.

**Mr Holyday:** The other thing is about the time frame. Here we are now in a situation where we've got to go the balance of the year, and if these changes are to occur — well, something is happening, of course — we're in the situation of being in limbo. To let that go on for a year or two, with elected people sitting there not knowing if they're going to be elected at the end of this or what the new terms of the government are going to be, I think would be totally improper. Because of the timing of the municipal elections, your time frame is narrow, and if you're going to do something, you've got to act. You can't keep putting it off and waiting forever.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale):** Mayor Holyday, why do you suspect that the mayors' original proposal made to Minister Leach prior to Christmas isn't being focused on even in the so-called referendum debate? Do you, as one of the signatories of the proposal made in early December, still subscribe to most of the ideas in it?

**Mr Holyday:** As I mentioned, at the time we did that, we had to come up with an alternative to one big city, and then we had to work out how we could handle the responsibilities of Metro, which I guess was the same

situation and problem the government was faced with. We thought the method we put forward was workable.

As I mentioned, after seeing what took place with the referendum and the debate around that one issue, which isn't a major issue compared to the handling of all these services, everybody went every which way. People changed their mind two or three times. Some people were going to have a full-fledged vote on it, with polling stations and ballots, and then they were going to have a mail-in. It's all over the lot.

I think we're in this situation, from a municipal standpoint, because we couldn't agree. My council wants one thing, Scarborough council wants another thing, the city of Toronto and North York want another thing. There were so many scenarios proposed within Metropolitan Toronto that we actually didn't have a position. We, by that, virtually turned it over to somebody else.

**Mr Hastings:** Do you believe that the question or questions posed in the so-called referendum are clear, concise and very comprehensively stated for all the voters in Metro Toronto so that when they go to the polls everybody knows what they're voting for?

**Mr Holyday:** I didn't support doing the referendum the way it's been proposed. I could see the scenario you're talking of; the fact that if you're only dealing with one question, you're not dealing with the problem. As a matter of fact, the problem doesn't come down to one question. There is a series of questions, and if you put them all on the ballot you'd come back with so many answers you wouldn't know what to do. I didn't support spending the \$300,000 in Etobicoke on a referendum.

**The Chair:** Mr Ford, you'll have to be quick.

**Mr Douglas B. Ford (Etobicoke-Humber):** I'm going to try to be quick. I just wanted to point out to Mayor Holyday that I perceive this as being equity across the board. Toronto is the heart of Ontario, possibly the heart of Canada, as I see it, and this government has to take care of all our people across this province. That's why we're in this bit of a dilemma with the mergers of the cities: to give equity across the board in the tax base. Not only that, the various cities, which are broken up now, are competing head-on with one another and trying to cannibalize the industries in those townships.

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When some of those townships grow on the outer skirts of the GTA, they take away some of the businesses in the present cities. Consequently, that leaves a problem for that city in its tax base for its residents and for its commercial value. That's the same thing that's happening in downtown Toronto. I can understand the concern with the people in Toronto, because this government's priority is taking care of all the people across Ontario.

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Order.

**Mr Ford:** You can say "Shame," but I have been here 64 years. Everybody else who has been here that length of time, bought their home and built a business, let them say, "Shame."

**The Chair:** Mr Ford, you weren't that quick. Mr Holyday won't have an opportunity to answer.

I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

Ladies and gentlemen, we can do this with an audience or without an audience. I've asked politely several times over the last six days to hold your comments to yourselves when members of the committee are talking to witnesses. If you can't do that, we'll have to do that without an audience.

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Order. It's the last thing I ever want to do. I've been very fair to this point; I think you all agree with that. But I cannot tolerate shouting down of members of this committee and I won't, so don't let that happen again.

### DUDLEY PAUL

**The Chair:** Would Dudley Paul please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Dudley Paul:** My name is Dudley Paul. I am a constituent of ward 12 in the city of Toronto, where I live with my wife and two sons. I have come before this committee today to voice my opposition to Bill 103, something which I suppose won't surprise most people in this room, and my opposition to the amalgamation of the six local governments in Metro into one enormous city government, the megacity.

I'd like to start by saying I am a teacher in the city of York, which is arguably one of the most multicultural parts of the country. The diversity of needs are great in this city, with its many transient and stressed families, people who have just arrived in this country, often from war-torn parts of the world, families which need the support of an accessible local government.

Last year, I worked with a family of people who had just arrived from Mogadishu, Somalia. Because they were on the wrong side of the conflict that has raged there for years, the children were unable to get the proper medical attention they needed. Both children were mostly blind, suffering from a debilitating eye disease. They weren't attending school. Their parents and caregivers simply didn't know what to do to get them there or to get them the help they needed.

At about 130,000 people, the city of York is fairly small, about the right size for a city, I think. As a result, it was reasonably easy to make the connections needed to help these children get medical attention, to assess what they needed for school and get the assistance for them to negotiate their way, both throughout the school, which they obviously needed because they couldn't see, and also for the curriculum.

It was easy to make the right phone calls so their parents could get help with translation. This was a case where both Metro and the city of York worked together to do what was needed. This is just one example of many instances where a reasonably small, albeit imperfect, bureaucracy works. Cooperation between Metro, local governments and school boards occurs every day to make this city more livable.

So I pose the inevitable question: Why? Why is it necessary to bring on such radical legislation as Bill 103? What justification is there for it? Are we facing a crisis which threatens the safety of citizens of this city, of this province? No, I don't think so.

Justification for this legislation seems to revolve around ending duplication of services and streamlining them. Is such radical legislation needed to streamline services? Is it worth the potential chaos? I think not. Streamlining of services can be easily managed under current municipalities and municipal structures.

Another justification for Bill 103 seems to be that it may save money. I think it will more likely cost us more. Even Mr R. Hikel, the author of the government-sponsored KPMG report, noted, "There's been no amalgamation of which I am aware, in the current fiscal environment, that would demonstrate the certainty of savings in Metro Toronto." He also noted, "It's possible that the amalgamation could produce significantly lower savings than we talked about or even a negative result, a net increase in expenditures." Savings, if there are any, will come at the cost of up to 4,500 jobs at all levels of local government.

Citing US census data, Wendell Cox, author and consultant, has reported that amalgamated cities of over a million people spend about 30% more than average-sized cities per capita and 152% more than cities with populations of between 100,000 and 500,000. Even the US government, as long ago as 1987, reversed its support for metropolitan amalgamation.

Also, when we look at the effects of downloading approximately \$1.6 billion in welfare, social housing and other costs on to the new megacity, expenses will balloon. About 27% of the 573,000 Ontario families on social assistance live in Metro. The potential for increased costs which the new megacity will have to bear in difficult times is enormous. We can expect taxes to increase anywhere from 15% to 30%. We can expect that services will be cut. Neighbour will be pitted against neighbour as interests collide.

It seems to me to be pretty thin justification for the damage done to local democracy in this city by Bill 103. It's democracy that I would like to talk about now.

Under Bill 103, there will be 44 councillors and one mayor to represent 2.3 million citizens, a population larger than five Canadian provinces. Each councillor will represent anywhere from 32,000 to 52,000 people. Under conditions like that, I don't believe there is any way that councillors can maintain adequate contact with their constituents and become involved with the issues that affect them. I don't see how they can be accountable to the people who live in their wards.

In fact, this sort of ratio is closer to that of the federal ridings on which the new wards would be based. We don't expect federal politicians to keep in touch with the day-to-day issues that affect people's lives, like those people in ward 12 where I live. But we should expect local politicians to be available. With 44 councillors and one mayor, I think the whole nature of local government, with its greater accessibility and accountability, is jeopardized. In this way, Bill 103 is an experiment in municipal governance, with no great justification and certainly no study as to whether it will be any better than what we have now.

This experiment brings an astonishing cut to governance, one which should demand considerable discussion and debate, yet legislation is being pushed through at the

pace of an express train. There is little opportunity for reflection, and I would like to speak about that next.

Other than the hastily prepared KPMG report, there have been no other studies, to my knowledge, which support the megacity as we see it today in Bill 103. The Golden task force recommended ways to combat regional fragmentation, linking Metro to cities and towns in the greater Toronto area. The Metro task force, the Trimmer report, recommended eliminating the Metro level of government, not amalgamating all the municipalities within it. The Who Does What panel did not explicitly recommend amalgamation. While panel chair David Crombie favoured amalgamation himself, even he stated that amalgamation must be tied to a carefully planned regional structure, not pushed through with little thought to the consequences, as seems to be what's happening with Bill 103.

Bill 103 represents a reversal on the part of Premier Harris. Responding to questions posed by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation before the 1995 election, he said he would not eliminate local governments. Yet less than two years later, we have just that with the proposed megacity.

Finally, I would like to talk about the trustees and transition team described in Bill 103. I believe these are the most deplorable aspects of this legislation. Here we have the imposition, before this legislation was given even first reading, of a panel of three appointed trustees, with the power to limit spending of local governments to under \$50,000. Under restrictions imposed by Bill 103, a local council may not transfer money between reserve funds, appoint a person to a position or hire a new employee without the approval of these appointed trustees. Incredibly, these trustees are not accountable, for according to subsection 12(1) of the bill, "The decisions of the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed by a court." They may not talk to the press. They are not subject to the questions of the general public.

The transition team, another group of appointees, will have the power to decide on the organization and staffing of this new megacity. They may demand city documents, hire department heads, and recommend the rationalization and integration of services across this megacity. Incredibly, under subsection 18(1), the decisions of this group of appointees may not be reviewed by the courts.

**1130**

In conclusion, it seems to me that a government which would introduce this legislation has little concern about the effects of its decisions. Perhaps the government's belief in its ultimate common sense has blinded it to the fact that it must not introduce legislation which is fundamentally opposed to democracy, which strips the powers of locally elected governments for the sake of convenience, which shackles them, as the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing said the other night, "to be on the safe side." It seems to me that a government which places its notion of common sense before reason and the common good promotes dictatorship, not democracy.

For that reason, I respectfully urge the members of this committee to recommend the withdrawal of Bill 103.

**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** Thank you very much for coming down and making a presentation to us. I have a couple of brief questions. During the election campaign

and in the Common Sense Revolution, they mentioned nothing with respect to the megacity or all the dumping. Do you believe that if Mike Harris had said something to that effect prior to the election, during the campaign, the people would have voted him in?

**Mr Paul:** That's speculative. I think it's a bad idea. I can't imagine why people would vote for something like this. It makes no sense to me at all.

**Mr Sergio:** Another question, since time is of the essence here: We have been telling the government that the figures they provided with the introduction of the legislation were wrong. On January 23, even our leader said there is a \$1-billion discrepancy in there. "Where is it? Give us the information, give us the figures." They said: "It is not so. Our figures are correct."

Now we have a government official, a deputy, saying they haven't been telling all the facts. Do you believe the people of Ontario are losing faith in this government when not all the facts have been put on the table?

**Mr Paul:** I can speak for myself and most of the people that I talk to. I'm quite involved with teachers' federations and parent groups, mostly people concerned with education. I don't know anybody in that constituency that supports this government or the megacity.

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Thank you very much. You've exceeded the time. I appreciate your coming before us today.

#### WALTER PITMAN

**The Vice-Chair:** Could I have Mr Pitman, please. Good morning and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Walter Pitman:** Thank you very much. First, thank you for giving me this opportunity to address this committee. I'm not going to spend a great deal of time on the bill itself. I can say that I feel the same outrage and frustration and fury about the way in which this process is going on and what appears to be the only outcome available. I, like so many other speakers this morning, would say that really the only procedure for this committee is to withdraw the bill.

I'm going to make a very personal commitment this morning, and that is simply to indicate the fact that as one person from Toronto, who was born in Toronto, who has lived here for most of his life, I see the destruction of a great city. I left Toronto for a number of years, returned, and within a year I was asked to head up a commission to look at racism in this city. Paul Godfrey was concerned about the number of East Indians who were being beaten up on subways. It became very clear that it was not a matter of the subways; dealing with safety and security on the subways was very easy indeed. It was a matter of dealing with the fact that half the people who come from other countries to Canada come to Toronto, and half of those who don't come immediately end up in Toronto. In other words, we have this magnificent city, this racially diverse city, which has managed to attract more people of different cultures, different religions, different colours than any other city in the world, with perhaps less racial violence than any other city in the world.

That is tied to governance. What we discovered when we did our report, Now Is Not Too Late, is that every

municipality in Toronto dealt with it differently but dealt with it appropriately, and as a result, we have the kind of city we can now be proud of, the kind of city that the United Nations revels in; it indeed suggests to other cities around the world that they should come to Toronto to see how it has been done here.

I teach a course now for an organization called Elderhostel. It brings people from all over the continent to learn about Toronto. It's a course on Toronto. People come from every city on this continent and they are amazed by the city. They couldn't believe what was going on in the papers last fall, when we talked about, in a sense, destroying what they believe is the magic. It corroborates exactly what Fortune magazine has said about this city: that it is extraordinary, unique and has to be nurtured rather than destroyed.

As I said, I left Toronto for about 20 years, for professional reasons. I came back to discover that I was now in a city that was an artistic marvel. We are the second city in North America artistically. We have far more arts here than Chicago or San Francisco. You can name any of the American cities other than New York. We're the third English-speaking city in terms of the arts in the entire world. That happened because of the kind of city we are. We were able to use the centre of the city, where obviously the artistic activity was going on, and develop that, at the same time making sure there was arts activity going on in the other cities around. It was able to be done appropriately.

I want to suggest to you today that governance is the essential reason we have the kind of city we have every reason to be proud of and are told by people around the world to be proud of. We do have problems, but they are not being dealt with by this bill.

Ironically, the term "megacity," for anyone who's looking at worldwide development, is a suggestion of horror. When we talk about megacities, we're talking about the Mexico Citys, with 20 million people. We're looking at maybe 20 or 30 of those kinds of megacities, certainly in the southern hemisphere, in the next 50 years. What people are saying is that they will be the hell-holes of this planet in the 21st century.

Here we are talking about a megacity in Toronto, when we have a city of communities, of neighbourhoods, where people can come to know each other and know each other's problems. We want to talk about a megacity in that kind of a context? We've got to get rid of this global preoccupation tied to the moral imperative of technology. We must stop being the pawn of multinational corporations who for some reason think megacities are a part of that total plan for the planet which will bring about that kind of world which will be dehumanized, even though it may be financially and commercially advantageous to a few.

I would suggest that doing it in the name of lower costs is no reason at all. We've talked about Golden, we've talked about Crombie. We have a treasure in this city, and her name is Jane Jacobs. She knows more about cities and the way they develop on this planet than perhaps any other person. What she says is that it will not cost less. She knows that. She says it will dehumanize, will destroy the glory of this city which has developed over the last century and a half.

I'll say just a word about what I see as the diminishing of democracy. Democracy is going to have a hard time in the next 50 years. We thought when the Berlin Wall fell that democracy would flourish. What we're discovering is that we have another threat — someone has already mentioned the Soros article — the threat of unleashed capitalism. That is one of the major problems we have. I see no reason to put more politicians out on the street, no reason to have 4,000 or 5,000 civil servants on the street. We've bashed civil servants, we've bashed politicians, we've destroyed the faith of people in the way we do things together, which we call government. To do that, I would suggest to you, is a very dangerous thing indeed. This bill — I'm not going to go through the individual parts of it — is an attack on our whole concept of people governing themselves in their own best interests and the interests of the people around them.

Listen to John Ralston Saul. Read his Massey lectures and what they say about the nature of our society if we allow this kind of development to carry on. We're just three years from the 21st century and we have many real problems to face. One of them, of course, is economics. I am embarrassed by the number of people I see with their hands out as I walk down Yonge Street every day. We are not dealing with that problem. What we've discovered is that the global economy is not going to provide jobs for people; it's a job-poor economy. We now realize that we've got to develop local economic development. We've got to devise ways whereby people can be used to do the things that have to be done, to serve each other, to serve the environment, in a sense to knit that society together.

This kind of development is in direct opposition to everything we know that would make things better in terms of local economic development. Strengthen your local governments. Give them more power. Believe me, I know exactly how governments can do that. For a number of years I was involved with the university world. You can use the fiscal power of government to get cities to cooperate and to get them to do the things you think have to be done. That's an example.

1140

For a couple of years recently I found myself chairing the Interim Waste Authority. I took more abuse in two years than I had taken in a lifetime. So I know that local governments can't do everything; that's why the Golden report, and that's why Crombie is so concerned about the development of a greater Toronto authority. You can't deal with garbage on a local neighbourhood basis. Nobody wants it in their neighbourhood and no politician is going to survive a day — just look at the political effect of my colleagues' activities. We managed to get rid of virtually every government member there was in the 905 area, as the Liberals lost their seats in the 905 area in trying to solve that problem too. In other words, it's politically impossible to do certain things at a neighbourhood level.

That's why you're going to have to deal with this on a greater Toronto authority level. That involves transportation and a whole series of things. That, it seems to me, is the area you should be looking at immediately:

strengthening your larger area, strengthening your local development. By doing that, you will save the environment for the children of the future.

I am ashamed about the fact that Toronto, this great city, in the sense that everybody looks at us as the greatest in the world, doesn't look after its own garbage. It sends it to the United States. It sells it to the United States, and the cost is horrendous. When the present government decided we'd get rid of the whole responsibility for garbage, it added \$100 million to the debt of this province in one stroke simply by getting rid of everything that had been done to ensure environmental responsibility, a direction that would have provided some way, until better technology can deal with waste, that we at least look after our own waste in our own community, as opposed to the imperialist system of sending it to somebody else.

**The Chair:** I'd ask you to wind up. We've come to the end.

**Mr Pitman:** There seems to be a Canadian perception that anything worth doing must be done somewhere else. It's a colonial concept that the best cannot possibly be here in Canada. Well, Toronto is the best city in the world. We have a right to be proud of that and we have a right to do everything we can to stop the irreparable damage that will be done by this bill.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, sir, for coming forward today.

#### KAREN STONE

**The Chair:** Would Karen Stone please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Karen Stone:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak before you on the City of Toronto Act, Bill 103.

Let me begin by giving you some information about myself. I came to Canada from Great Britain with my parents when I was six months old. My earliest memories are of Toronto. When I was eight, my family moved to the United States. For 13 years I lived away from Canada and for most of those 13 years I missed my home. When the first opportunity to return to Toronto came, I took it, and I've lived here ever since. I may not have been born in Canada, but this is my home.

It is for this reason and others that I support Bill 103. I have always believed that Toronto is a great city and I believe that unifying the seven local governments will make Toronto even greater. I have heard comparisons that if Toronto is unified, the city core will become like some major American cities, such as New York or Los Angeles. I would like to remind people that those cities, even if Toronto were unified, are still considerably larger than Toronto. Toronto's population would be 2.3 million. New York's population is over 10 million, as is that of Los Angeles. Additionally, New York and Los Angeles have very different demographic patterns from Toronto.

Toronto also has an advantage over most American cities in that its citizens appear to be determined to maintain their neighbourhoods, regardless of municipal boundaries. For example, Greektown extends through both North York and East York. Chinatown covers the

existing city of Toronto and the city of York. How, then, would unification weaken these communities' identities?

I have also heard local councillors say that they're the people who get things done in a community. If that were so, wouldn't you think I would know who my local councillor is? If my local councillor really did get things done in my community, why isn't he knocking on my door to ask how I feel about local services or holding town meetings to keep me advised of ongoing issues?

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Ladies and gentlemen.

**Ms Stone:** I find it disconcerting that my local councillors are eager to hold meetings for issues that they don't like, and yet I don't hear from them when there is an issue they do like. I am one of the people of Toronto who would like to be kept informed on all of the issues, not just the ones my local councillors disagree with.

In doing some research and while attending community meetings, I have been told that the regional government of Metropolitan Toronto currently provides almost 75% of the services that we receive right now. The aim of Bill 103 is to continue to provide those services as well as provide the remaining 25% of services that the municipalities currently provide.

In attending community meetings this week, I have heard speakers opposed to Bill 103 say that municipal governments compete to provide better services at better rates than others and that implementing Bill 103 would remove the incentive to compete. I agree with the opponents to Bill 103 when they say that municipal governments compete with each other. However, it is not to provide better services.

I have never seen any marketing by a municipality to say that their local services are better than in others. I have seen in the news items about the outrageous expense accounts that councillors have municipal governments pay. Those expense accounts are paid by my tax dollars, and I have to say I resent someone expecting me to pay for things like \$200 dinners or evenings at strip clubs.

I am a member of a board of directors for a condominium corporation. Can anyone honestly tell me that I would remain a member of the board if I expected the owners of the corporation to pay for dinners out or for extravagant expense claims?

I heard it said at a community meeting last night that a larger regional government would lose touch with its taxpayers. Isn't that what the community councils and volunteer neighbourhood committees would be for? If an issue is important enough, these councils and committees would have the strength to go to the regional government and suggest options and solutions for problems within the communities. Additionally, volunteer committees would be more community-oriented than paid politicians. I believe if you're dedicated enough and you believe in your community, you shouldn't need to be paid. Being a member of a neighbourhood committee should be an issue of wanting the best for your community, not how much you get reimbursed for your time.

Recently the media carried the issue of smoking bylaws in restaurants. None of the existing municipalities came up with consistent rules about smoking. In some restaurants you could smoke if your maximum capacity

was a certain level. In others you could only smoke if you were in a separate environment, such as another room. In still others you couldn't smoke in a restaurant, period. What sense does this make? No wonder no one liked the non-smoking bylaws; there was no consistency. One government would provide the consistency that providing efficient and effective service needs.

**1150**

People keep saying that six municipalities provide better service than one, because their service would be local. I'm confused.

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Order.

**Ms White:** When I go grocery shopping, I don't go to six different stores to get my milk, my meat, my bread, my fruit and vegetables, my non-perishables or my household products; I go to one store. It saves me time and it saves me money.

One point that seems to be getting lost in this issue is that unification would not happen overnight. People in Toronto would not suddenly wake up one morning to find that their community is now part of a unified Toronto. It would take until 1998 to make the transition to a unified city and it would take the cooperation of many people to make it happen.

I keep hearing that a transition team is like saying we don't trust the municipal councillors. To use an expression, hogwash. We need a transition team to make sure that key issues don't get missed. What one municipality provides exceptionally well may be something to keep in a unified city, while other municipalities may have other things that they also do exceptionally well. It is for this purpose that we need a transition team. How are we to know what to keep and what not to?

As well, the municipalities need the transition team to help them in determining how to improve service delivery. We've all heard the saying, "You can't see the forest for the trees." The same could be said for unifying Toronto. Each municipality is going to want to protect its communities, and well they should. But how do you protect your community and cooperate in providing an improved level of service? The best answer for that is a transition team. When you are having trouble making up your mind on an issue, do you just toss a coin or do you talk to someone who is objective and can offer you a different point of view?

I have learned that after unification, how services are delivered and where they are delivered will be determined based on the most efficient and economical method of providing those services. Decisions on services would not be limited to municipal boundaries that make no sense. Further, the new municipality would start with a clean slate and be able to use the best and most effective ideas for providing better service for less money.

If a service should continue to be provided locally, then that's what would happen. Some of those local services that could stay local would be things like day care, planning, construction permits, libraries and recreation. It seems to me that if these services are staying local, what change would I notice? I would still be able to dial 911 to get a fire truck, an ambulance or the police. My garbage would still be picked up, my streets would still be cleaned and snow would still be cleared.

I have heard people say that the government is moving too fast, that change doesn't have to happen today. I would ask, if not now, when? Restructuring Toronto has been a topic of discussion for 20 years. The issue of change has been studied by Anne Golden, David Crombie and others. We can't keep talking about how to make Toronto better without actually doing something about it.

The government was elected primarily on the basis that it would do what it said it would do. Are we now, the people who elected this government, going to condemn the government for doing what we want it to do? I have always heard people say that politicians are hypocrites and not to be trusted. Why is it that when a politician actually does what he says he will do, the voters are still not satisfied?

A point for people to remember —

**The Chair:** Ms Stone, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up. We've come to the end of your allotted time.

**Ms Stone:** Yes. Canada is a parliamentary democracy. That means that when you have a majority government, you have the power to implement your policies. It is to the Premier's and to Minister Leach's credit that the public is being consulted at all. If we wanted a dictatorship, we should have kept the New Democrats. Their social contract had considerably less input than the City of Toronto Act.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Stone. I'm sorry to interrupt, but we've gone beyond your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward and making your presentation today.

Ladies and gentlemen, I don't think I should have to remind you that if someone comes before this committee, they should not feel in any way intimidated or uncomfortable because the people in the audience don't agree with their viewpoint. I'm not going to allow people to come before this committee and feel that way. I'm also not going to let members on either side be hooted down or hollered at, as happened before.

We can do it with an audience or without an audience, as I said before. I can't pick people out who are sitting at the back making catcalls and clapping, so I'm not going to start trying to do that. We'll just ask everyone to leave. So please refrain from that participation. I've said that several times. I see a lot of people nodding out there, because you know that that's the case. Thank you very much for heading that.

Would Mr John Sewell please come forward.

**Mr John Sewell:** Mr Chairman, I understand a bell usually rings at four minutes to 12. Is that going to happen?

**The Chair:** Mr Sewell, what I might suggest is, we're going to have a bell probably in about two minutes. If you prefer not to start, we can just go and the members can vote. All members have to have the opportunity to vote. As soon as we come back from that vote, we'll begin your presentation, and then Elizabeth Hill's.

**Mr Sewell:** What time would that be?

**The Chair:** As quickly as we can get in there and then have the vote.

**Mr Sewell:** Is that 10 minutes, 15 minutes, something like that?

**The Chair:** Five minutes, probably.

**Mr Sewell:** Okay, sure.

**The Chair:** Is that acceptable to all committee members? So we'll recess until after the vote.

*The committee recessed from 1156 to 1207.*

**The Chair:** Ladies and gentlemen, please take your seats and put an end to your conversations. Order, please. If you're going to have conversations, have them in the hall.

### JOHN SEWELL

**The Chair:** Welcome, Mr Sewell. You have 10 minutes this afternoon to make your presentation.

**Mr John Sewell:** I have lived my whole life in Toronto and am proud to have played a part in the city's political life.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and other members of the government have said Bill 103 is about amalgamation, and their remarks have addressed issues around that subject. I believe the arguments made by the government are shallow, not supported by experience in other urban areas, and that amalgamation will do substantial damage to an urban area which, while not without problems, works reasonably well.

But the few minutes allowed for my presentation do not permit me the luxury of discussing the amalgamation issue. I want to talk about the sections of the bill that are part of another agenda about which apparently the government dares not speak publicly, an agenda which you, as members of the government party, are expected to support.

Take sections 12, 13 and 18, for instance. These sections state that organizations appointed under this legislation, organizations which have power comparable to or in excess of existing municipal councils, are exempt from the rule of law. I am referring to the board of trustees and the transition team, the decisions of both being final and, as these sections state, "shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court."

Suppose the board of trustees or the transition team decide, as they are clearly permitted to do in the sweeping powers given them in this bill, to cancel a contract which someone has with the municipality. These sections mean that the aggrieved party has no remedy in the courts. Suppose the transition team decides to fire a staff person who objects to the havoc being wreaked by the team. These sections mean the aggrieved party has no remedy in the courts. Suppose the trustees decide to help themselves to municipal funds. These sections mean that they can get away with any nefarious behaviour they want, since their decisions are final and may not be "reviewed or questioned by a court."

I want to ask each of you a question: When you ran for office, did you ever imagine you would be asked to establish an appointed body that was beyond the reach of the courts and of our legal system? I'll bet most of you only thought that kind of thing happened in Communist countries where the leaders said it was in everyone's interest to establish strong governing bodies that would not be distracted by individuals who tried to press for their personal rights in court.

What you have found, probably as much to your surprise as to the rest of us, is that the leaders of the party to which you belong now demand, here in Ontario, in Canada, of all places, that either you support this totalitarian action or you be dismissed from the government. Something has gone dreadfully wrong for your leaders to ask you to be so unreasonable, so dictatorial, so revolutionary. Would your children or grandchildren think you wise to support such action? Or the members of your church? Of course not.

I will put this as kindly as I can. These sections have nothing to do with amalgamation; they are about tyranny and they demand your immediate repudiation. Do not follow the unreasonable demands of your leaders; reject them. Do not begin to go down this course that forsakes the rule of law.

Let me turn to sections 9, 10, 11, 16 and 17. These sections take decision-making away from locally elected councils and put it in the control of a provincially appointed board of trustees and a provincially appointed transition team. The effect of these sections was summed up by the person who supposedly knows most what this legislation is trying to do. Minister of Municipal Affairs Al Leach, in his December 17, 1996, letter to all councillors in Metro, wrote, "During 1997 you are still a member of a duly elected council with of the rights and duties that such a position entails except as concerns the financial management of the municipality."

Mr Leach did not say, "You will be penalized or prosecuted if you waste or fritter away the municipality's resources in the road to amalgamation." He could have said that, but he didn't. Instead, he removed all aspects of financial management from elected councillors and put them in the hands of people whom he personally appoints and who report privately to him.

These are very powerful sections. They dispense with elected councils because the government leaders have a better idea: They will appoint their own people to make the important decisions. Your leaders think that people who are elected to govern cities can't be trusted to do their bidding. Better to push them out of the way.

Perhaps some of your colleagues in the government will say this is an example of "direct democracy," which of course is what the parliamentary assistant to the Premier has recently written to many people about. Others would see this as part of a policy of drastically cutting down the number of politicians. But members of the public would not agree. I think they would call this the replacement of local democracy with dictatorship, and they would be right. Those who will make the decisions are not responsible to the city's citizens. They certainly aren't elected by them and they have no intention of listening to them, and unlike municipal councils, which can be taken to court, they are above the law. These characteristics have the smell of dictatorship and arbitrary decision-making.

Who would ever have suspected this kind of legislation would be proposed by government leaders in Ontario? How can you as individuals be part of this destruction of democracy? Not one of you ran for office on the platform that you would dispense with elected officials at another

level of government because you thought dictatorship was better. Of course you didn't.

Each of you, I am sure, has a strong personal value system, one that is rooted in the idea of democracy. I'm sure of that. We want to hear from each of you personally reaffirming that value and denouncing these pernicious sections. Tell your leaders they are wrong and that as individuals you will not countenance legislation which puts our cities under the control of those who have all the characteristics of dictators in Communist countries.

Sections 14 and 20 state that the provincially appointed trustees are paid for by Metro property taxpayers, even though the province appoints them and they report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. These sections offend against a very old principle: No taxation without representation.

How can you forge ahead with these sections which offend such a venerable democratic principle? Why would your leaders ever ask you to support something so offensive? I suspect you won't find very many members of the public willing to support these sections. The last time a government tried to impose taxation without representation in North America was in the 1830s, and that led to rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada.

Section 24 gives the Minister of Municipal Affairs, without notice or consultation, the power to make virtually any order he deems necessary or appropriate. This section is unusually blunt, indicating the minister may, and I quote from that section, "impose conditions on the exercise of the powers of an old council." This is straightforward autocracy, something that could be expected a few centuries ago. Now, as the 20th century draws to a close, you are being asked to again support this kind of nefarious behaviour.

You know as well as I do the saying of Lord Acton: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely." The minister, the person you are being asked to support, is bound to misuse such far-reaching powers. Indeed, he already has. The minister has ordered that the board of trustees are not permitted to speak to the press. In doing so, he has reinforced the dictatorial nature of the board of trustees and his control over it. Do not support him. No one elected you to countenance this kind of autocracy. Reject these sections and this approach.

Time prevents me from making a full analysis of this bill. Were the government not so intent on hurrying the bill through this process, I would have had the opportunity to make a full presentation, a full one that this bill deserves. Indeed, were your leaders not in such a rush to enact this folly, all those who have asked to speak would have had the opportunity to do so.

But in the few minutes remaining, I wish to touch on one more matter: reserve funds. The bill makes but one mention of reserve funds, section 11, which restricts expenditures from reserves. Nothing in the bill protects reserve funds, which amount to over \$1 billion in the Metro Toronto area.

Why are reserve funds not protected? Amalgamation proposals are always very specific about what happens to reserve funds. The minister's order for the Kingston

amalgamation says reserve funds — and it's very specific — will be kept to be used only for the benefit of the taxpayers of the former cities in which the revenues were generated. Bill 103 gives no such assurances.

I hope your leaders will say this is an oversight to be quickly remedied by an amendment, but I fear the worst. I believe your leaders have their eye on this pile of money, either to use it to fund severance pay of the 4,500 staff they must dispense with if they wish to realize the savings they have touted, or simply to transfer it to provincial coffers to deal with your financial problems.

As a property taxpayer in Toronto, I am not willing to let you squander this money, although the legislation takes away my recourse through the courts. This bill prevents any legal action against the board of trustees or the transition team, the bodies which will take control of the reserve funds the very second this bill is given royal assent.

1220

Don't be a party to this theft. Do not support your leaders as they pull you down such a dishonourable path. Your leaders ask too much of you in Bill 103. They promise amalgamation, but they deliver autocracy and dictatorship. Do not support their wicked schemes. They have no place in Ontario. Stand up for your own values, the values of democracy and the rule of law which so many other Ontario residents share.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Sewell. We've gone well beyond the allotted time. I want to thank you for making a presentation today.

#### ELIZABETH HILL

**The Chair:** Our next presenter is Elizabeth Hill. Welcome, Ms Hill, to the committee.

**Ms Elizabeth Hill:** Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on Bill 103. I have three points to make about Bill 103: (1) it's undemocratic; (2) it's a tax grab; and (3) it must be stopped.

My name is Elizabeth Hill and I have lived in the city of York for 20 years. I have raised two sons there, and when they were young, I got involved in their schools. When I was 12 years old — a long time ago — I wrote a letter to the Toronto Star, and it was published, that if I were a school trustee, I would change things so that boys studied cooking and sewing and girls studied manual training. I saw things, in my view, that needed changing and at a very young age I felt I had the opportunity to be involved.

Well, I did run in an election, in ward 4. Ward 4 is roughly Dufferin to Caledonia and Rogers Road just north of Eglinton in the city of York. My friends and my sons helped me in that campaign. I spent about \$1,000 and I was successful. I'm presently in my ninth year as a public school trustee representing the residents of ward 4. I saw public office as an opportunity to make a difference in my community. That opportunity for other residents and for future generations is being replaced by a megacity, mega-government, mega-bureaucracy, mega-expensive, mega-mistake with Bill 103.

Bill 103 is amalgamating six cities into one which is bigger than some provinces. With that, the basic demo-

cratic opportunity for ordinary working people to actually exercise their democratic right to run for office will be just a pipe dream. Twelve-year-old girls who feel there's an injustice will never be able to dream to run for local community office. Your new councils and boards will be taken beyond the budget and the resources of the average person. As well, the councillors and trustees will be further removed from their constituents and will be practically inaccessible.

The tax grab: I truly believe that it's deliberate, the process of Bill 103, because if you remove those who are closest to the people's needs, the gatekeepers, you open the door to the government's true agenda, which is to take money away from people in Metro, to reduce their services and provide a 30% tax cut which will benefit the wealthy. To make it clear, I wanted to demonstrate something but I understand you're not allowed to use props. The lunch pail is symbolic of working people and the briefcase is symbolic of business and the wealthy, and the taking of the money from one and placing it in the other is what Bill 103 is all about. That's what the tax shuffling will do.

Much has been documented about the effects of downloading of social services to the local taxpayer and the uploading of education dollars to the province, which will give it control over the cost per pupil. There are grave concerns about the destructive impact on public education and the inability of the new megacity to provide needed child care, long-term care and other services which are expected to increase.

Bill 103 must be repealed. The forced amalgamation is autocratic and repulsive to the majority of taxpayers.

Let me tell you a true story that happened in the city of York. Some local politicians decided to sell a public park called Fairbank Park to a developer so he could build condominiums in it. The citizens gathered around and they demonstrated, petitioned and acted for three years. They made a lot of noise against this plan to take away their parkland. One of the local aldermen said to them it didn't matter what they thought because he was elected and he would decide what was best for them. He thought that democracy stopped when he was elected and that he now had the power to do what he wanted.

You might know that there was a happy ending to this story. The people won. They saved their park. Children can play on the swings, slide on toboggans and enjoy the green space. They lived happily ever after, until the Tory government came to power. Now they and everyone in the province — we — have the biggest fight of our life, a fight to preserve not only a park but a community, a city and democratic rights.

Yes, honourable members, I believe the Tory government is wrong. The people know it, and the people's opposition must be heard. If you have any love in your hearts, defeat this mega-monster bill. Thank you.

**Mr Silipo:** I don't know if you were here this morning. Mayor Prue said that basically the one reason he's been given as to why this is actually proceeding is because Mr Leach felt that he had to "do something," that something being that he had to show — assuming that they were making some changes here but that there was no sense nor rhyme to it. Is that your sense of why this

is happening? I know you talked about the tax grab, you talked about the undemocratic nature of it. How much credence do you give to that notion that what we're seeing here is just actions by a government that's trying to use this bill as a smokescreen for those other actions that you've described?

**Ms Hill:** I tried to make it clear, with taking the money from one to the other, that's what it's all about. Eroding the democracy is for a reason. People don't take power just for the sake of taking power; they take it for a purpose. I believe that what this government is trying to do is to erode our social services, take them away, privatize them, reduce public education to something that people will want to get away from and go to private schools, and eventually we won't have a public education system. I hope I'm answering your question, but I think that is the real agenda.

The tax grab is not just the taxes but it's taking control and reducing our communities to something that cannot provide the resources. That just opens the door for privatization so somebody else can do it and make money and pay a pittance to working people, the same working people who now are benefiting from good benefits and decent salaries.

**Mr Silipo:** One of the things we've heard a lot about, particularly this morning in the presentations, were the pieces dealing with the powers that are given to the trustees and the transition team. I guess I'd like to ask you, if the government sees its way to making some major changes in those areas and reducing or removing some of those draconian provisions, does that make this bill more acceptable?

**Ms Hill:** No, it doesn't to me, because that is just the flavour of doing it, but the fact is that what we're dealing with is still a forced amalgamation of cities without the consent of the people, without their having full information and debate. It still leaves open the opportunity to reduce the closeness of those who are elected at the end of this year, the elected representatives, to their constituents, because there will be huge areas.

It is a lot more undemocratic. That is the most obvious, repulsive part of it, as we just heard the speaker before me talk about it, but I think changing that will not make it palatable.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Hill, for coming forward and making your presentation. We'll recess until 3:30.

*The committee recessed from 1231 to 1530.*

#### DAVID PERLMAN

**The Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome back to the standing committee on general government. The first presenter this afternoon is Dominic Bellissimo. Not here yet? David Perlman? Good afternoon, Mr Perlman, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Perlman:** Thank you. My name, as you said, is David Perlman. By way of introduction, briefly — there's more in my written presentation but I won't take up time with it — I'm a resident for the last 22 years of downtown west Toronto, in the Kensington Market area. I've been an active member of my community there for many years, a member of local associations

and on the board of community centres and such like. I've also worked at various times on committees reporting to the city of Toronto, to Metro and to the district health council.

By the way, in that context, my previous contact with the minister, Mr Leach, was in the context of him being the general manager of the TTC. I was a member of the Spadina transit consultative committee in the context of TTC plans to put a Spadina light rapid transit line through the community. It was a terrible design initially, so we had about eight years to observe Mr Leach. The process was excruciating for the TTC and our community.

Our greatest consolation eight years later is that the TTC line that goes into effect this spring is a vast improvement from what was originally contemplated in the late 1980s. Mr Leach's consolation is probably that Bill 103 gives him the opportunity for revenge on all of us — neighbourhood activists, city politicians — all in one fell swoop. Get rid of us all once and for all. I think these days he must feel like he's died and gone to bureaucrats' heaven.

There's something I want to say through you to Mr Leach, which is that I believe Bill 103 needs the same kind of shakedown that the Spadina LRT did, because if it gets railroaded through now the way they wanted to railroad through that Spadina LRT in its original lousy form, I believe it's going to cut the heart out of our city in the same way as that LRT would have cut the heart out of the Spadina communities.

I'm not advocating eight years of consultative nonsense the way we had with the Spadina LRT, and it's not going to happen because the one good thing I can think of to say or the best thing I can think of to say about Bill 103 is that it's an awesome cattle prod. I think many local civic community activists and politicians are realizing for the first time in their lives the power of the province to do pretty much what it likes in certain respects.

In terms of a cattle prod, it should be used to herd the local councils within Metro and from the surrounding potential GTA communities into a forum for structural change. The way it's being talked about now, in order to force Bill 103 through by the end of this year, it is like using a cattle prod set to kill. I don't think it serves Crombie's dream of a greater GTA, Golden's dream of a greater GTA, your own dream of a greater GTA, greater Toronto, to load six screaming cities into an already overloaded, obsolete Metro and drive it off the edge of a cliff.

Metro, as your minister knows from his TTC experience, is already too small to bring about the essential coordination of regional services. It certainly can't bring about coordination of transit, we've learned that already, because it doesn't deal with the GTA. It probably can't work for policing or any of the other essential services that need to be regionalized, and as a local government for this city, it is already too large and too remote to thrash out or deal with any genuinely local issue.

This other cockeyed idea, the Toronto Star's latest editorial midgetry on the subject, which is this GTA, this amalgamated Metro as a stepping stone to a greater GTA council, is a ludicrous idea. If you implement a GTA

council that is co-extensive with existing Metro boundaries, then what you're going to do is seal the fate of any future truly regional GTA. You tell me which of the contiguous 905 municipalities, having seen these six government lambs led to the slaughter, is going to participate in your confederated greater Toronto area. All you have to do is look at what happened in Hamilton last weekend in terms of their plebiscite to realize that if you implement a Metro-extensive GTA, you've basically put paid to the essential idea of a truly regional confederated greater Toronto, which is what is essential.

I've got one central suggestion that I want to make to this committee. I understand that Bill 103 talks about local community councils as subcommittees of what I would call mega-Metro here, but I think this is really fuzzy thinking, because what is needed is a sharpening of the distinction between regional issues and local issues, not a blurring of the lines.

#### 1540

I believe what needs to happen is that you need to take this idea of the community council that's right there in Bill 103 and stand it on its head. Rather than taking the path of annihilating the existing local councils that we have in order to impose from above a kind of pseudo-community council structure reporting back to Metro, what you need to do is give official notice that Metro is obsolete, that its boundaries are no longer meaningful in a GTA context, and you need to require all existing local councils within your projected GTA to send their democratically chosen delegates to your City of Toronto Act table. You need to then set a reasonable time limit on their deliberations and you need to wave your Bill 103 cattle prod as necessary to impose urgency and order on the process.

My time is flying here and rather than saying things already ably said by many people — I've been really moved. I've listened to about 100 of these submissions to this committee so I'm not going to try and restate a lot of things that have been said but rather, anticipating that there may not be time for questions, I'd like to put on the table a couple of the ideas I'm hearing advanced by proponents of this particular megacity proposal.

The first one is Mr Gilchrist's favourite. He has been using it on TV and various places. He says if you just drive any of the streets, like Lawrence Avenue or Sheppard or Finch, from the border of Etobicoke all the way across to the border of Scarborough, you won't see when you're passing from Etobicoke to North York to Scarborough. You don't see the internal limits of these cities any more. His point is that if you can't see these boundaries, they're of no meaning and the regional government should therefore override them. But the point is that if you travel those roads west from Etobicoke into Mississauga or east through Scarborough into Markham, you're not going to see those boundaries either. So the point is not that the internal boundaries are meaningless but that Metro's boundaries are meaningless, and this is what needs to be addressed.

The second one that seems to be gaining a lot of ground — I heard Case Ootes on Metro council last night using it — is this argument that Metro is already delivering 72% of the services, so if Metro is delivering 72% of

the services and all these other six lazy, good-for-nothing councils are only delivering 28%, get rid of the lot. We'll just make the Metro councillors or the GTA councillors work a little bit harder and these other six governments don't need to be there.

It's catchy, but it makes no sense. In fact it's the perfect illustration of what is wrong with the thinking behind Bill 103 in its present form. Metro or a GTA council must handle the big-ticket items. That's the whole point. It's got to handle transit. It's got to handle police. It's got to handle all those areas of regional concern, and these are necessarily expensive services, therefore the 72% figure. But just apply that to your hospitals and see what nonsense it makes. The big-ticket items in hospitals are tertiary care, transplantation, major surgery, a specialized children's hospital.

**The Vice-Chair:** Can I ask you to wind up, please.

**Mr Perlman:** I'm wrapping up. One paragraph to go.

So if you take the same winner-take-all logic, you would have every community hospital and clinic amalgamated into your tertiary care mega-hospitals, and the brain surgeons would be doing double duty as clinicians.

The point is that the case for regional renewal is compelling. There are few who would deny that. As an example, anyone who dials 911 in the region should be able to count on timely, excellent, uniform response, and there could even be savings in this kind of centralization, but what is the price of that excellence and savings if by ripping the heart out of local government, you make it an inevitability that people are going to have to dial 911 more of the time?

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Perlman. You've exhausted the time available. Thank you for appearing here today.

### DOMINIC BELLISSIMO

**The Vice-Chair:** Dominic Bellissimo. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee. You may begin.

**Mr Dominic Bellissimo:** Thank you very much, and I apologize for being late. I feel like I'm working longer and longer hours all the time.

I'd like to begin by introducing myself, and I'm wearing two hats today to speak on behalf of two different organizations. The first one is the Metro Network for Social Justice. We'll be sending in a written submission after this weekend's meeting that we're having. I have to be frank with the committee and say that there were some people on the steering committee of the Metro Network for Social Justice who didn't feel that many of the ideas that we would put forward in opposing Bill 103 would be listened to by this committee, but I assured them that I would come and do my best to get the members here to consider some of our recommendations. The Metro Network for Social Justice is a non-partisan coalition of more than 180 organizations here in the Metro area. We share a commitment to social and economic justice.

I'm also here as a resident of ward 3 in the city of Toronto, and I'm representing a local group that just formed four weeks ago called Ward 3 Communities Against the Megacity.

I want to commend the committee for their endurance. I know that many of the things I'm going to add today in

opposing Bill 103 are not going to be new ideas. You've probably been hearing them from thousands of people, and I just want to add our voice and my own personal voice to the thousands of others that have come in to say Bill 103 just does not make sense on many levels.

I'm going to ask you to consider looking at Bill 103 and its implications from the point of view of the kind of work I do. I work on a daily basis with students and with parents and with young adults who are from various racial and ethnic organizations and communities in the city, and when I look at some of the provisions of Bill 103, when I look at some of the downloading of services and programs, I'm really quite worried.

I want to step back for a second to ask myself, is the real activity and exercise that we're engaged in about duplication? I ask myself, do people really wake up in a cold sweat at night saying: "Oh, my God, we have too many fire departments. Oh, my God, we have too many departments of parks and recreation"? I don't know very many people who actually say that to me on a daily basis, and I work with hundreds of people in public education and in the local residents' groups I'm a member of.

I ask myself then, who's really behind saying this is about duplication, disentanglement, streamlining, making our services more efficient? Who would be opposed to making services delivered in a very efficient and cost-effective manner? No one would say, "Waste our taxpayers' dollars." Often we're here as the taxpayer criticizing you for spending too many of our dollars.

I have to say then that one of the strongest voices that we hear asking for Bill 103, certainly the board of trade is asking for it and it seems to have a very, very supportive ear. We also hear from bank presidents who say that. We also hear from large sections of corporate Canada here in Toronto and in Metro saying, yes, things need to change and Bill 103 is the answer.

I don't agree. I could speak about the outrage of the loss of democracy. If I were to come in and say to you that as MPPs you've now lost all of your ability to make decisions, you've now lost all of your ability to spend dollars, and I and three other people have been appointed as a trusteeship committee that's going to make those decisions for you, I'm sure you would react in a way that would express your outrage as well. I would hope that you would.

I'm not going to speak for a very long time about how Metro is being treated very differently from the rest of the province in terms of the forced amalgamation with a very, very tight time line, with, in a sense, disregard for the referendum process that was announced early. I'm glad to see that the government has agreed that now some of the referendum results will be looked at. I suggest that was more a question of the large outcry over the bill and the number of local community residents and organizations beginning to be organized and pressuring for that.

I want to speak for the bulk of my time now on the downloading of services. As I said before, the voices of the board of trade have often been heard and expressed in the pages of the mainstream newspapers and through some of our government MPPs. I'm asking you to hear some other voices.

I'm not here on behalf of every person of colour in the city or every student who doesn't have English as their first language; I'm here as a person who works with those communities on a daily basis. When I think of Bill 103 passing as is, I fear that with the downloading of these kinds of services and costs, while they won't result in the loss of tremendous services overnight, over a period of a year, two years, five years, we won't recognize if we have our public library system ever again. We won't recognize our community centres that disappeared. We won't recognize some of the fees that have to be charged to maintain the parks and recreation programs we have, services like child care, homes for the aged, our welfare programs that we all pay taxes for because people have a right to and deserve those services.

**1550**

I don't make any apologies or any complaints when my taxes are taken off my property tax or when I pay for my taxes because I want those services to be used. I feel that Bill 103 with this downloading is going to have a double impact, particularly on women and particularly on communities of colour, communities which don't have English as their first language. I would ask you to think — over the thousands of people you've heard over the last few days, have you heard from people who have come in and read their brief in a language other than English? Have there been provisions made for any kinds of translations of the bill? I certainly know a lot of people who say they're nervous to come here and say what they're thinking in their first language.

I also worry about Bill 103 resulting in the privatization of services that we all value. We own them, they're our services. Why should we give them up? Why should we lose hydro? Why should we face the possibility of privatizing water, for example? I recently returned from England where they have a disastrous situation with the privatization of their water system. Not only has the quality of the water decreased twice, but the rates have doubled twice as well. I just don't think that privatization, which may result from Bill 103, is the way to go.

Certainly in ward 3 one of the things we're hearing about when we knock on doors and talk to fellow neighbours is not that they're outraged at the loss of local democracy. Many of them as workers in the Portuguese or Italian or Vietnamese community didn't feel they had much control, much democratic voice to begin with. They're certainly outraged at the thought that AVA is coming, that their property taxes are going to double, that they're not going to receive more services for that increase in taxes. In fact, they're going to begin to lose the services that many of them have fought for and valued this number of years.

Finally, I would ask you to listen to the voices that say we shouldn't continue to shift the property tax burden on to residents, homeowners and tenants as opposed to large companies, large industries living in the Metro area. When I think for myself about who has the ability to pay property taxes, me or my local branch of the Royal Bank, I don't have to think very long who has the ability to pay.

I would ask you to take some of this into consideration. We'll be submitting very, very specific amend-

ments to Bill 103 that we hope you will look at, but I've really come in urging you to use some of the time that you've talked with people, to really listen to those of us who are opposed to what may happen over the next few years for our standard of living and for our local communities here in Toronto.

**Mr Terence H. Young (Halton Centre):** Thank you for your presentation. You say that people don't wake up saying, "There are too many fire departments." Of course they don't. But there are people who have trouble sleeping at night, many people in Ontario who can't afford to pay the taxes they're paying, various taxes: sales tax, income tax, property tax. There are seniors who are losing their homes, have to sell their homes because their taxes are too high. The taxes of many of the people you say you represent will actually be going down, their property tax, and they will be able to save.

Metro has some very serious problems right now. I don't know if you know, but there are thousands and thousands of tax appeals right now. The wealth that exists in Metro and the way that so many homes have had their property taxes held so low, a lot of it is generated from commercial activity, much of it in downtown Toronto, the big companies that certain people don't think add value, but they create a lot of jobs and they pay tremendous taxes. A lot of people haven't been paying their fair share compared to the rest of the people in Ontario, and these are some of the things we are trying to fix.

An earlier presenter this morning said there are probably 100 neighbourhoods in Toronto, and I've been trying to count them here: Lakeshore, Mimico, Parkdale, Dovercourt, High Park, Swansea, Rexdale, South Kingsway, Beaches, Cabbagetown, Annex, Forest Hill — I can hardly name them all. But the reality is the neighbourhoods often don't have anything to do with one another or don't share much in common.

For instance, in north Etobicoke you have Rexdale. I don't think there's too much interface, other than at the city hall meetings, between Rexdale and the Lakeshore. They have different needs, they have different communities. This bill will empower, I believe, neighbourhood committees or neighbourhood councils which can do the kind of thing that you do, that would give you and the people in your neighbourhood group a real, direct voice in a Metro government so you could do more of what you do.

I see it as a natural evolution that started in the 1950s. The change has happened in 1953 with Metro and it happened in 1967 when it went to six cities and it's going to happen again — a natural evolution over decades where services are provided and taxes are kept reasonable. I can see the neighbourhoods gaining a greater and a stronger voice in this model. Would you comment on that, please.

**Mr Bellissimo:** Sure. I think we confuse the issue when we talk about three different kinds of taxes. When we say income tax, sales tax and property tax, you're really levelling in all kinds of different government responsibilities. When you simplify the situation to say: "This is actually going to be better for you. We've removed education from the property tax" — I thought that made a lot of sense actually, to have the province

pay for education. But when I see the tradeoff of hundreds of millions more dollars being downloaded on to me as a community person in the municipality, I don't see that there's really any savings. I think in fact it's going to be more devastating for me.

What's happened is that in the guise of simplifying some very complicated problems that do overlap, it's been very easy to convince people that this will be of benefit. I don't think necessarily that the tax appeal situation is insurmountable. You can freeze property tax assessments right now until municipalities have the ability to start looking at what needs to change in property tax. I don't deny that the property tax is really way out of whack right now. I don't deny that.

**The Chair:** Mr Bellissimo, I apologize for interrupting, but we've gone a little beyond our allotted time. Thank you for coming forward today and making your presentation to this committee.

#### MARGARET SMITH

**The Chair:** Margaret Smith, please. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Margaret Smith:** Mr Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Margaret Smith, and I thank you for this opportunity to speak about the proposed Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act.

At this stage in the hearings, it is difficult to present a point that has not already been made. I am also concerned that I present information that will actually be considered. Recent statements by the Minister of Municipal Affairs seem to dismiss the people who have expressed concerns or opposition to this bill as either "lefties" or as people who did not vote for this government and hence are not part of its constituency. I find this attitude shocking and I feel disfranchised as a citizen. However, I will make my comments here today assuming it is time well spent. I will comment on the issues of local government, citizen involvement and competitiveness.

First, on local government: I have lived in Toronto for 24 years and have been involved in my community. For some time I was involved in advocating for accessible and affordable day care. I appeared before commissions, committees and task forces at the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, appealing for action on this issue. My experience was that only the municipal politicians at Toronto city council were able to find a flexible, innovative solution to help deal with this issue. These politicians were more accessible and responsive.

It's not that the federal and provincial politicians were not interested. However, the issue of day care at the provincial and federal levels is far more complicated and solutions are more expensive. Local government has greater flexibility to innovate. The complexity of modern urban planning issues demands greater innovativeness, flexibility and experiment to find customized solutions that are cost-effective at the local level.

The minister has indicated his commitment to strong local government. However, there does not seem to be agreement on what the concept of local government entails. I'm not convinced that 44 councillors representing 2.3 million people — that is, one councillor for about

52,000 people — is the appropriate condition for strong local government. I have no confidence that the neighbourhood committees will be effective, because experience indicates how difficult it is to make them work.

Professor Andrew Sanctor at the University of Western Ontario, an expert in local government, observed that increased size is not consistent with greater flexibility and innovation. The Brundtland report reinforces this view: "Good city management requires decentralization of funds, political power and personnel to local authorities, which are best placed to appreciate and manage local needs."

The provisions in Bill 103, section 16(4), set out the duties of the transition team. The broad scope of these duties for an appointed team, accountable only to the minister and above court review, is not consistent with the Brundtland recommendations. In fact, this bill gives political control over the new city to the minister for an indefinite period; the team may continue beyond January 31, 1998. This exercise of power by the province is not consistent with strong local city government. In fact, it appears to completely emasculate local government.

Citizen involvement: I have worked for many years as a planner in a large corporation. In my experience working with both the private and the public sectors, early and effective citizen involvement results in better and more informed decisions. I was a member of the Canadian Standards Association technical committee that developed guidelines for public consultation. It is generally accepted that involving those affected by decisions early in the planning and decision-making process is cost-effective and an important aspect of best business practice.

#### 1600

Premier Harris often speaks of the model of government analogous to that of a business. He suggests that the Premier represents the role of CEO, his cabinet members are the board of directors and the citizens are the shareholders. I do not agree with using this analogy, even to make the point about running government efficiently and effectively. But if we have to take this analogy, the CEO and the board are accountable to the shareholders. I cannot imagine any business that would choose to treat its shareholders as this government has done in this debate about local governance. The CEO would be dismissed. This behaviour is not consistent with best business practice.

The Brundtland report states, "The pursuit of sustainable development requires a political system that secures effective citizen participation in decision-making...and an administrative system that is flexible and has the capacity for self-correction."

In 1990, approximately 50 business leaders established themselves as the Business Council for Sustainable Development. These leaders came from the international business community, including chairmen and presidents from Chevron, Volkswagen, 3M, Ciba-Geigy, Nissan, Nippon Steel, Mitsubishi, TransAlta and Northern Telecom, to name a few. They advocate a new partnership with stakeholders.

In their report, *Changing Course*, they define stakeholders to include "customers, employees, shareholders, suppliers, government, neighbours, citizen groups and the

public. Involving these people, with all their differing views and concerns, usually leads to better decisions and more universal support for their implementation."

The report further states: "Stakeholder involvement requires more effort than traditional public relations or information-sharing responses. New forms of collaboration are needed."

In this case, a stakeholder involvement process could have addressed whether there is a need for municipal government restructuring and what it might be comprised of. An involvement process could have given adequate attention to developing an implementation plan. Consultation could have contributed to a socioeconomic impact assessment to ensure that all externalities — that is, social costs — were fully understood and incorporated into the decision-making process. However, no citizen involvement was undertaken and no credible impact studies were completed.

Further, there does not seem to be a realistic plan to reconcile over 116,000 existing bylaws in Toronto alone, 60 collective agreements, the various operations procedures for six utilities etc, and there's no sound information about the real cumulative financial impacts on local government.

Finally, by not having meaningful citizen involvement in the design of this bill and appearing to ram the bill through the Legislature, the government has caused more concerns and opposition, even from those who voted for them. While it may be true that there is some natural resistance to change, it is more true that there is real resistance to changes imposed on people without their consent.

**Competitiveness:** Minister Leach has stated that his proposed amalgamation will make Toronto more competitive. However, as Michael Porter indicated in his study, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, there is no accepted definition of "competitiveness." The minister has used this concept without conveying a clear understanding of what it takes for a city to be competitive. Cities can be attractive for business investment and for living conditions. We know from Fortune magazine that Toronto is now a desirable location in which to live and work. Porter also discusses the important role of "social and political history and values in influencing competitive success." These cultural aspects "cannot be separated from economic outcomes." However, it appears that Bill 103 and the associated downloading of social program costs would irrevocably change the very conditions that have already proven successful.

The minister seems to suggest that greater competitiveness would derive from reduced costs resulting from an amalgamation. However, expert research indicates that there are no cost savings as a result of amalgamation; more likely, higher costs would result. Even KPMG, the author of the minister's only study, has no confidence that savings would occur.

Studies indicate that cities with over one million people cost 20% to 40% more to run because they have bigger and more expensive bureaucracy. Coupled with the amalgamation is the associated proposal to download provincial costs for social and health services to Toronto property owners. Increased taxes on businesses could lead

to business and industry leaving Toronto and possible future municipal fiscal crises. These conditions are hardly conducive to improving competitiveness.

There is no evidence to support the minister's claim that Toronto would be more competitive. In fact, the evidence suggests the opposite.

In summary, I recommend that Bill 103 be withdrawn and that a planning process for possible government restructuring be commenced which fully involves all those stakeholders potentially affected by the decision.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much for a very thought-provoking presentation. I appreciated your reference to Brundtland. I think you're the first presenter to make a reference to Brundtland in terms of the viability of cities as living organisms, so that's really added another dimension. It's interesting that she agrees with the municipal governance experts, who are saying the same thing Brundtland is saying, that for cities to work they have to be flexible and competitive. Would you like to comment on that?

**Ms Smith:** There's quite a lot of discussion about what it takes for cities to be effective. The local model seems to not jibe with the amalgamated city because of its size. There's a lot of discussion in the report about the need for flexibility, to be close to the needs of the citizens, to be able to respond, to be innovative, to be able to experiment, to do tailored solutions that are more beneficial for everyone.

**Mr Colle:** As a shareholder in Toronto, what message are you giving the CEO of Toronto or of Ontario?

**Ms Smith:** In this case, the CEO is operating outside of his mandate. He's being totally irresponsible and not reflecting the will and the needs and the wants of the shareholders and he should be dismissed.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Smith, for coming forward and making your presentation.

#### PHYLLIS CREIGHTON

**The Chair:** Would Phyllis Creighton please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Mrs Phyllis Creighton:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity to come before you.

I am angry. The city of Toronto — my city — has enjoyed democratic government since 1834. There is no crisis requiring it to be dismantled in a rush and put under the boot of the provincial government. Creating one huge amalgamated city, wiping out our six diverse municipalities and investing governance in trustees and a transition team, with the Minister of Municipal Affairs as king overall, will put us on the road back to despotism. From my 67 years living and belonging in Toronto, I utterly oppose Bill 103 as the destruction of local democracy, the epitome of bad planning and an outrage to citizens.

I was born in Toronto, grew up in Forest Hill Village and have chosen to live in the city of Toronto for the past 42 years. I love my city. Toronto is neighbourhoods people identify with; mine is Lawrence Park. I lived in Paris for a year and found that dazzling metropolis too vast to identify with. Toronto has a human scale. Scale matters, and neighbourhoods, for loyalty, safety, quality

of life. I want the local identity of my city to be sustained: No American megalopolis, please.

Our city is rich in diversity and its close and responsive city council has fostered meaningful citizen participation. With globalization, dizzying technological change and unsettling market uncertainties, the local matters much more for grounding and participation. From my long years of contributing to this city's life, of belonging, I say to you: Do not amalgamate us into a vast, amorphous agglomeration stretching across very different, now self-governing, functioning communities.

#### 1610

This bill has many outrageous provisions. Give our more than two million residents only 44 councillors? What a betrayal of democracy. In wards with over 50,000 constituents, there can be no real access to one's councillor or effective vigilance to ensure responsibility and accountability. Remote, opaque government we don't need.

I am outraged that a board of trustees, already appointed by the provincial government and functioning without any legislative warrant, gets duties and powers by section 9 that turn our democratically elected municipal councils into puppets. We elected these councils. We hold them accountable. They have conducted themselves responsibly. There is no fiscal or structural crisis in our municipal governance, yet they are, in mid-term, to be but the "old councils," disempowered, irrelevant. Since according to (4)(c) the trustees "shall...amend and approve" 1997 operating and capital budgets as they "consider...appropriate," they will freely reach into our pockets and no doubt into our \$1 billion worth of reserves.

As a taxpayer, I am outraged that under section 12, judicial review or questioning of their decisions is prohibited. Just as outrageous is section 18, which exempts from court review and questioning the appointed transition team, with its vast dictatorial powers to determine the new city's administration, municipal rates, spending, neighbourhood councils and integration of municipal services. As if all this arbitrary power were not enough, by section 24 the Minister of Municipal Affairs is made local despot, empowered to impose any conditions he pleases on "old councils," prescribing duties for trustees and transition team and determining transitional matters as he pleases.

As a historian with an MA and some grasp of our British parliamentary heritage, I am especially incensed at the absolute powers this bill gives to the minister. When absolute power was wrested from the monarch, it was not to give arbitrary authority to other men, to give equally unfettered power to ministers, but rather to empower the citizenry. Breaking the unwritten limits that convention sets in our parliamentary democracy, as you will do if you pass Bill 103, undoes the social contract between governed and government. Citizens will owe you loyalty no more.

You stand on very shaky ground with Bill 103. The government has no popular mandate for amalgamation; the Tories did not seek one in their election campaign. It has no expert mandate either. No report published by any government in Ontario in the past 40 years recommended

amalgamation of these municipalities. Amalgamation entails vast changes, doubtless years of chaos. Why the rush? Why have we not been given serious plans, with careful costing? What has the government given us? Insulting propaganda, at our expense, declared by the Speaker to be in contempt of the Legislative Assembly itself; and faxes without even a fax number on them.

The alleged savings cited by the lightning KPMG study? Suddenly they became possibly no savings or even significant costs when KPMG spoke to the press at the study's launch. My management consultant husband says they backpedalled out the door pretty fast. In their best-case scenario, you would destroy local democracy to save each of our households 50 cents a week. But amalgamation experts such as UWO Professor Andrew Sancton say that, worldwide, amalgamations always come with heavy extra costs. Tax savings with amalgamation are a myth, a lie. The insulting process the government has subjected us to — propaganda, no reasoned plans, trustees insinuating themselves into our city's operations — mirrors the arrogance shown citizens in Bill 103. And the announced downloading of the costs of welfare, health and assisted housing will cripple the new city, rob women and children of badly needed services and create hardship. Women are very angry. We won't take it.

To conclude, a couple of lines from our Raging Grannies song:

We tell you now no mega-taxes,  
no mega-dumping, no megacity.  
We don't want trustees or transition team,  
it's no go, no go.  
Take our voices seriously,  
no megacity.

**Mr Silipo:** Mrs Creighton, some of the government members have been known to say: "What's the concern really all about? The neighbourhoods will still be there, they'll still maintain their identity, so what's all this big concern about" — as they put it — "artificial boundaries?" What would your response be?

**Mrs Creighton:** I don't believe we have any reason to think the neighbourhood councils that will be established by the process in the bill will afford free, voluntary participation. That's what my city is all about. It's about flexibility. It's about being able to go down and put an idea before your councillor and get some support, and to feel close. I don't believe, by the time you're down to 44 councillors, that having an appointed neighbourhood council — when you're in a ward that's going to be enormous and will include all kinds of different neighbourhoods.

I have lived in Forest Hill, I've lived in Moore Park, I've lived in Rosedale, I've lived in the Bathurst-St Clair area and I've lived in Lawrence Park, and they are all very different. When it ain't broke, you shouldn't try to fix it.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs Creighton, for coming forward.

JIM NEFF

**The Chair:** Would Jim Neff please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Neff. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jim Neff:** Thank you so much. I must apologize for not having written notes and for a bit of shakiness. I was awakened this morning about 6 am with a very problematic stomach and have had sweating and chills all morning from a salmon sandwich I had at midnight last night. It appears the toxins are getting into our salmon more than we expected. I do have these rough, handwritten notes.

I certainly want to thank you for this opportunity. I understand that many more have been denied than have been appointed to speak here. I must say I can't speak for anyone but myself, as I trust no one else can without that power being assigned. It is the loss by the many, the majority, that they've been denied their right.

We are a society, I've been led to believe, that is based on the concept of contracts and agreements about what we do, that in normal, healthy relations we do what we individually think is right and decent to do. It's said that only two people can make you do what you don't want to do in this world of ours: One is a judge in a court of justice and the other is your mother.

Now, Mike Harris is neither of these, so a third concept emerges. We must ask, what is the reason given to deny a community their rights? Has the War Measures Act been enacted? Is it because there's a segment of our population that's been disruptive, deceitful, harmful? Well, many would say that this act is being disruptive, deceitful and harmful to society itself.

How this comes about: One reason given is that Al Leach, it appears, has great expertise in the boardrooms of business and he's bringing that expertise to his job here. We have the good, solid business concepts of downsizing, rationalizing, combining departments under supermanagers and many sound business strategies being applied, but being applied to the normal associations of people, and thus we're disrupting centuries of evolution, possibly back to the Magna Carta.

We are not a business. We are a society of people. I wonder who among your colleagues cheered when the cutting down of the golden spruce in BC occurred. Do they get excited about that? This was renowned, for over 200 years, as a place where people came, and it had an ability to be spiritually uplifting. Is Toronto not the same today?

Why take a healthy system and replace it with a weak one? Soon there will be signs of illness. The majority of new businesses don't survive beyond two years. If this ill-thought-out, quickly initiated procedure fails, what then? This bill is a draconian measure. As David Crombie says, it's wrong in principle and disastrous in practice.

1620

I'll try not to bore you. A little item, "We're Killing the Planet Even Faster than Feared," from the United Nations:

"Humankind is extinguishing life on earth faster than even the alarmists had foretold."

"A United Nations report released yesterday warns that the planet is experiencing an unprecedented mass extinction."

"The report, called Taking Action, says the overall quality of the world environment is deteriorating in nearly

every category — from the water we drink and air we breathe to the oceans and forests that sustain us.

"Elizabeth Dowdeswell, a Canadian who heads the UN environment program, said it's estimated that between 150 and 200 species of life become extinct every 24 hours — a mass annihilation caused by humankind's unsustainable method of production and consumption.

"With so much being lost, Dowdeswell said it's an open question whether the human species can survive.

"We have many examples of episodes of disease, for example, that have started lower down in the food chain and worked their way up.

"We know that if the pollution we're dumping into the water and the atmosphere around us is affecting insects, birds and animals — can humans be very far behind?"

I must say, it is well known that Mike Harris is clever; that goes without saying. Bully for him. Al Leach is clever, and bully for him. Janet Ecker is clever, and bully for her. They're clever to invent a process to circumvent democracy. They're bullying everybody to try and get their way. As David Crombie said, "This is a mistake in principle and it's not a risk worth taking."

As with all governments that go through a life cycle, this government is in its adolescent stage. We need to give it time to mature, enough time to start to be intelligent instead of the cleverness of adolescence, and they are very clever indeed, these bullies.

It's apparent that little, if any, consideration has been given to the impact of changes being proposed or the ability of the system to serve the public and the right of the public to have access to the courts and to those who are in charge of operating and fine-tuning the system.

I urge you to seek a moratorium on proceedings with Bill 103. It is part of a package, and until a proper analysis of changes to the administration and the impact of the proposed cuts can be made — proper analysis would make good business sense, and until this is done, the results may well be chaotic.

May I leave it at that? Thank you very much.

**Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York):** Thank you very much for bringing forward some of your ideas today for us. When you were concluding, you were talking about some kind of time line that you felt was really important that we needed to add to this process. I just wonder whether you are suggesting here that you agree there have to be some changes in terms of the way in which municipal government in Toronto is organized currently.

**Mr Neff:** I think everyone has agreed to that. I think possibly the one thing which has a consistency is electricity. It seems Faraday's laws from a century ago are still being applied very well today by all electricians and electrical companies, and maybe a combination of the amalgamation of the electrical services might make good business sense. I'm not experienced enough in the background of these commissions to know whether it would be a practical thing to do but it seems rational, anyway.

I just think that in good old conservative Ontario tradition we should go slow, we should take our time, we should do it right.

**Mrs Munro:** Do you have any comments on the studies that have been made in the past few years that look at the way in which the city should be structured?

**Mr Neff:** I'm not an expert. I understand all the experts that have been asked have advised: "Don't rush into it. Don't make vast, large mistakes." This morning I heard, while I was shaking in bed, a radio interview of a person from Mexico, where they had a great amalgamation disaster, and his analysis was: "We used to all go out and gather a few eggs. Now somebody goes out with a great big basket, they gather some eggs, and they gather some more eggs. If they trip, we've got one hell of a mess."

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Neff. I hope you feel better later on today.

#### BOARD OF TRADE OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO

**The Chair:** Would members from the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto please come forward. Welcome, gentlemen. Before you begin, I'd appreciate if you would each introduce yourselves for the benefit of Hansard.

**Mr George Fierheller:** Mr Chairman, thank you very much. I'm George Fierheller, the president of the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto. With me are Mike Lauber, the chairman of our local governance committee, and John Bech-Hansen, one of our senior economists.

I appreciate the opportunity of appearing before you. Having listened to the last couple of speakers, it looks as though I might be singing a slightly different song than they did and I certainly won't attempt to match the voice we heard.

What I'd like to do is perhaps just stand back from this for a few moments. There is a written piece of paper that we have sent around that has some facts and figures and thoughts in it. I don't really want to read that. I'd just rather talk with you for a few moments and then my colleagues may want to make their own comments.

When you look at what's really happened in Metropolitan Toronto over the last number of years, this has been an evolving situation. In fact, since 1953 there has always been a move towards unification. When you think of it, over the years the Metro government, initially responsible only for transit, roads, some piped services and so on, gradually assumed responsibility for police, licensing, social services, ambulance and waste disposal, among many other things. The responsibilities assigned to today's Metro government, as it exists, are such that its budget is nearly three times larger than the combined budgets of the six area municipalities.

In this context, if you think of it, amalgamation as is currently proposed is just the next logical step in an evolutionary process that already sees nearly 80% of the Metro property tax bill supporting unified municipal and school finance services. What I'm saying is that the fiscal and economic reality is that Toronto is already an amalgamated city and in fact is amalgamated at this point far more than almost any other city-region I can think of that ever contemplated the unification of its constituent municipalities. I think that's an important thing to remember.

There's another important thing to remember, as well. When you take a look at the map of Toronto, you very quickly see that what you are looking at is not something that was designed to protect neighbourhoods, not something that was designed with any thought of the cultural or regional or racial or ethnic mix that we have that's so wonderful and diverse in this city. It's a very arbitrary set of borders. To try to protect that current system and claim that is the only thing that will protect these neighbourhoods doesn't seem to make very much sense to us.

1630

I was very interested in the previous speaker, who spoke of having lived in Rosedale and Forest Hill and Moore Park and other places like that. A lot of us have done that around the city we all love. Those are the places that people identify with and they are not the sorts of things that are protected by the current municipal boundaries.

I happen to live in North York, for example. I happen to work in the core of the city and I have a lot of difficulty identifying with North York. I find that North York is something that was created in the early 1950s, primarily by drawing a line across Hoggs Hollow — and I might add that everybody still refers to it as Hoggs Hollow, not North York — and I have never really found that is an entity to which I could relate very easily. I do happen to live in the Don Mills area, and I find that I can relate very well to Don Mills. I'm very concerned about what happens in the area and I don't want somebody putting a gas station on the corner and things like that. But that's quite a different thing than trying to preserve a very artificial boundary.

I think the implication was made by some of the previous speakers that these are boundaries that go back for many, many generations. As a matter of fact, they don't. They by and large are very new creations and I don't think that trying to preserve those is going to do much of anything for us. When you take a look at that map, you'd very quickly see that, and see that making a larger entity out of this would probably make a lot of sense.

Now the question is, how realistic can you be about coming up with neighbourhood councils, community councils or whatever, that will start to represent those areas as well? One of the previous speakers said, "How in heaven's name can 44 people plus a mayor represent a community of 2.3 million people?" Well, if we only have some 270 MPs representing a country of nearly 30 million people — over 30 million, I guess now — and somehow or other that seems to do the job, having well in excess of 100 people to represent an area that's less than one tenth of the size doesn't seem to make an awful lot of sense or seem to be necessary.

The board of trade believes, and we believe this in conjunction with the provincial government, that amalgamating Metro does serve a couple of purposes. It certainly serves the purpose of achieving single-tier governance, and that's something that everyone, including the mayors, have effectively said they would like to do. They have quite different ways of proposing that, but nevertheless that is the sort of thing they would like to do. It also preserves the Metro-wide delivery of the services that are already there. The mayors' proposal, as I briefly read it,

looks as though each of the cities would pick up some of these services that are already amalgamated across the whole Metropolitan area. What that would accomplish is beyond me.

Let's take a look at a few of the things that I think could be benefits from an amalgamated city. First, I think it would restore strength at the centre. This is something which I believe is very important. The Metro Toronto area's capacity to influence decision-making at the GTA level is critically important, particularly in an era when property tax is going to play a much larger role in funding urban services than it ever did before. We should bear in mind that Metro still possesses over half the assessment base of the GTA and nearly two thirds of the commercial assessment. So it's going to be very important that Metro in its new form have a very major, strong voice in the Greater Toronto Services Board, as it's proposed. I think that is important.

Second, it will enhance the capacity of the Metro area to speak with a single voice when dealing with provincial governments. There has been a lot of concern about whether the Premier is becoming too strong in some of the things he's doing. Well, having a very strong, amalgamated Metro will in fact help. As a matter of fact, it won't matter whether it's a PC, Liberal, NDP or even Reform — that's the only government we haven't tried recently, as I recall — it doesn't matter what the government is, that strong voice is going to be helpful. I'm not actually sure why the province wants that. That's a very interesting question that maybe some of the members here could ask, because I would suspect that the new mayor of the new Toronto is going to be one of the most important politicians in the province. However, I do think it will provide a useful and strong counterbalance to provincial power, and that's something which obviously the current, very divisive Metro area does not provide.

There's been a lot of talk about whether taxes can be reduced in this amalgamation, and you've seen figures of all kinds from all sources. I can only say that I believe there is an opportunity to reduce taxes, but I don't think anyone has said there's a guarantee of that; at least I don't think we would claim that at this point. We can only say that reducing duplication and overlap, doing all the things that have been pointed out — reducing six fire departments to one, reducing seven planning departments to one, reducing seven roads departments to one and so on — must surely create some opportunities for some economies. Also, that way I think there are much better opportunities to do some things that might reduce the costs by either contracting out or doing something else that would make a more sensible way of delivering a lot of these local services. Really, there are an awful lot of things, whether it's snowplowing, sidewalk maintenance, garbage collection, whatever these things are, that could likely be done better purchasing those services when you've got a much larger operation to deal with.

One of the things that I think is most compelling about this from the board of trade's standpoint is the enhanced visibility that a new central city of this size would have with the public, with the media, with the business community, and very importantly, with foreign investors. We are obviously, as a board with 10,000 members, very

concerned about investment in the city, the ability to promote the city. We're doing the best we can with the GTA marketing alliance for both the 905 and 416 areas, but a very strong core city will certainly help that. There's no question in my mind about that.

I also think that when you integrate a lot of services in a broader area there could be some benefits that would come from allied services. Police and ambulance, for example, might be amalgamated, and some services with local fire. Things like that could become very important. Metro community services, local public health and so on, solid waste disposal, recycling and things like that could probably be combined in a much better way in a much larger operation.

Just a comment on the real cost and tax implications, and I'll be very brief on this. Obviously there are going to be transitional costs, and I think everybody has acknowledged that: severance, renegotiation of collective agreements and so on. That's why we have been careful about saying that there are going to be any immediate cost savings, although we believe there are abilities to do that in the longer run.

But I don't think that some of the examples that have been used as to why Metro shouldn't amalgamate necessarily apply here. In a number of cases, like Halifax, for example, or Winnipeg, the amalgamations were often between a strong core and a relatively underdeveloped, almost greenfield area outside. It was this kind of thing that tended to up the costs, because of course the greenfields wanted the same level of services as were in the major core area. This is something which would not occur here because what you're talking about is only the amalgamation of already very mature areas. The services are essentially there, the infrastructure is in, and I don't think you would see that same upward pressure that you see in some of the other amalgamations that have been talked about.

I think it's also important to bear in mind that a lot of the services we're talking about are already amalgamated. That's very unusual. You don't usually find that when an amalgamation is talked about. Usually these things are starting from scratch. You also have, of course, an infrastructure there already, which is helpful. Obviously Metro and the current city governments would be done away with, but it isn't as though these municipalities have not been used to working together on a great many things; they most certainly have, and I think therefore you're starting from a much stronger base than you might otherwise start from.

In conclusion, the board of trade is supportive of the amalgamation and we think it is just the next logical step in something that's been going on for decades. Ultimately perhaps the extension may go even farther. If you go back to looking at my map that I talked about earlier, you'd realize there are also some very arbitrary lines that are drawn between Etobicoke and Mississauga, or wherever the other areas are, and maybe ultimately there could be some further amalgamations take place.

1640

But at least this is a logical next step, and we do believe it's essential to have this strong city, able to promote itself internationally and attract more jobs and

more opportunities to the city. We do think there is an opportunity to reduce costs, although, as everyone says, that may not happen initially.

We certainly like to see at least the proposal for the protection of real communities as they exist within the city through the community councils and the neighbourhood councils.

Finally, if this does proceed, we would be most willing to work with the transition team to try to make sure these realities are realized.

**The Chair:** Sorry to do this, Mr Colle, but we have about one minute to comment or question.

**Mr Colle:** I want to thank you and the board of trade for adding to our understanding of this, and your intervention in terms of the concern about downloading I think is appreciated by people universally.

The one comment I have is that I really think the board of trade is underestimating the human potential and investment people made in the downtown core and in the individual cities, in East York, Toronto. The proof of that is the continual reference you make and the government makes to 72%: Because 72% of the expenditures are already amalgamated, "Therefore do the rest." In other words, you're forgetting that the rest is the human investment. That 72%, if you were to take out the pass-through from the province to Metro, would be about equal or less because Metro is only an agent, like under social welfare. It wouldn't be 72%; it would be less than 50%, probably, if you took away the pass-through.

I just caution you to recognize the human investment that people are concerned about. This anti-democratic sledgehammer of a bill is going to dispossess people of some rights and some contributions they've made and will make. I'd ask you to continue to appreciate that.

**Mr Fierheller:** We share everyone's concern about the protection of the amount of human effort, the sweat equity, that's gone into the various neighbourhoods. I really do think that what people relate to is very much the Rosedale or the Moore Park or the Leaside or the Don Mills or whatever it happens to be, and it's trying to make sure that sort of thing is protected that's going to either make or break this.

**The Chair:** Thank you, gentlemen, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### WENDELL COX

**The Chair:** Would Wendell Cox please come forward. Good afternoon, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Wendell Cox:** Thank you very much, members of the committee, Mr Chair. First of all let me express my great gratitude, as an American, at being given the opportunity to offer my views in front of you today. I am a consultant, an international public policy consultant, and I am serving as a consultant on the megacity issue for the city of Toronto.

Just to give you a bit of background, I was a three-term member of the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission. My specialties as a consultant are competitive tendering, public employment, government efficiency. I have performed a performance audit for the British Columbia transit system. I wrote the rules for the

conversion of the transit systems in New Zealand to competitive tendering, and I served for three years as the policy director of the American Legislative Exchange Council, which is the conservative organization of state legislators in the United States.

What I'd like to do today is just quickly run through three basic issues that I think are important to consider with respect to Bill 103. First is the issue of costs, and my belief from the research is that indeed costs are not going to go down; they're going to go up; second, some issues with respect to democracy; and third, issues with respect to retention of what you have among the six cities at this point, Toronto being considered by many, rightly so, one of the best places to live in the world.

I'll start off, first of all, with the issue of efficiency and cost. Bigger is not better. Virtually all the evidence indicates that larger municipalities tend to be more costly on a per capita basis than smaller municipalities. In the United States, where we have a large number of virtually all levels of municipalities, our cities of more than a million people are on average 20% more expensive per capita than our cities of below a million. Our counties of more than a million are about 40% more expensive than our counties of less than a million. Our transit districts and our school districts went through major amalgamation movements from the 1940s through the 1970s, and during that period of time we saw the cost of education per child more than double in inflation-adjusted terms and the cost of public transit double at a rate that was even greater than the increase in health care costs, which I'm sure all of you are aware of because of the debates we had just a few years ago in the United States over health care.

The board I served upon, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, was, at the behest of conservative politicians in my community, amalgamated with another major board, and it has been nothing short of a disaster — major scandals with respect to the building of the local subway, not to mention cost escalation that has been very significant.

I should also remind you of the testimony of Mayor Hall to you recently in which she pointed out, at least in her attachments, that the cost per capita of Metro government is about 60% higher than the cost per capita of the four regional governments in the 905 area. That's after taking out the social welfare costs, which of course burden Metro even more.

In the Trimmer report that was prepared for the Conservative Party during the election, they indicated that we need to be very careful about what the committee referred to as false economies of scale, and I think you do have to be careful about that. You saw the same kind of concern raised in the Golden report as well.

There are really five reasons you can expect to see the costs of government within Metro go up as a result of amalgamation.

First of all, there will be the issue of service harmonization; that is, virtually all communities will be required essentially to have the same level of service, and service levels tend to migrate upward.

Even more sure than that is labour contract migration. You are not going to find your public employee unions seeking to get the average wage or the average benefits

or the lowest; they're going to seek the highest, as I would if I led them, which of course I wouldn't.

You are going to see more bureaucrats, because as government gets bigger you need more bureaucrats. It is not a mathematical progression; it is a geometric progression. Those bureaucrats are going to be paid more on average, because in the public sector, as you know, remuneration is largely a function of the size of staff and the size of budget.

But much more important, what you will do, and this may surprise at least you on the Conservative side, is that you are going to incredibly strengthen municipal trade unions. You are going to put the new government at great risk, at great disadvantage in negotiating labour contracts. In larger governmental circumstances, public employee unions are much stronger than they are in smaller governmental circumstances, which will tip the balance against the citizens and against the taxpayers.

Just as an example from my own experience, happening shortly after my having left the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, our board in a labour negotiation gave away to the transit union \$70 million of money it had promised was going to be given each year to the expansion and construction of a rail system. That \$70 million is gone forever.

I urge you also to think about what you're being told by people like Jane Jacobs here, who tell you that larger government is less innovative, less open to new ways of doing things. From the experience in the United States — and I am one who believes you can significantly improve public services through competitive tendering — I can tell you that the larger municipal governments, in which employee trade unions are stronger, and they are in those kinds of government, are absolutely death to competitive tendering. There is very little competitive tendering going on in the United States in large municipal governments. It is going on in smaller.

That brings me to a reminder that during the mid-1980s, remember that Maggie Thatcher and the Conservative government broke up the Greater London Council and left London with I think 32 boroughs, the largest of which is half the size of the city of Toronto at this point. The reason they did that was because labour had obtained such control over the Greater London Council that costs were completely out of control and service levels were going down very significantly.

**1650**

Just as an aside, if one of the things you are trying to do is reduce the costs of local government, I really urge you to look at what the Victoria government is doing in Australia, where they are basically requiring municipal authorities to competitively tender 50% of their budgets. They are getting cost savings beyond anything that any of the most radical studies have suggested for amalgamation.

My point is that amalgamation is not going to get you any savings at all, because these other costs, these five categories I've described, are going to far more than compensate for the very minor savings that are estimated by some at a maximum of 2%.

Now let me speak just a little bit about democracy. A city of 2.4 million people is too large. It's larger than six Canadian provinces, it's larger than more than 15 Ameri-

can states, it's larger than Slovenia and larger than a number of countries.

Sydney, which is by no means a laggard in international competition and is the scene of the next Olympics, has a population of 7,400[sic]. It has 36 municipalities in an urban area of three million people. Melbourne has 39; London has 32. The big problem with going to megacity is you are going to dilute democracy very significantly. The person's voice will be, in the case of York, changed from one in 150,000 to one in 2.5 million. That is very, very important.

The kinds of cost escalation and service retardation that occur with large governments are being manifested or have brought forward in the States a significant municipal secession movement that is going on right now. We expect that by the turn of the century, Staten Island, one of the boroughs of New York City, will be gone from New York City. It's hung up in the courts now, but it is expected that an advisory referendum that passed two to one to have Staten Island secede from New York will in the long run bring secession for Staten Island.

The San Fernando Valley, where I used to live, which has about a million of the 3.5 million people in LA, is now undertaking a process to try to secede from the city of Los Angeles. Legislation came close to passing last year in the California Legislature that would set up a process to do that. It will be pursued again this next year.

Now let me just speak briefly about the city of Toronto, the six cities, the municipalities and how proud you should be of how wonderful a place it is to live. You should be aware that there is virtually no other central city in the western world, save Vancouver, where the population is not declining. Central London's population is down more than 50% over the last 40 to 50 years. Paris is down about 30%. The city of Toronto has the same population as it had in 1950.

What I'm saying is, you have something very special here, a city of neighbourhoods and so on, and if you impose some new governmental structures that cause taxes to rise significantly, and I think megacity will, and in the long run begin to retard services, you're going to start driving people out. That is the kind of thing that could cause Toronto to follow, unfortunately, the direction some other cities have followed, which is not good.

I think you have some answers. The Conservative government has talked about establishment of a Greater Toronto Services Board that would oversee services on a truly metropolitan level where they are regional services. I think that makes all the sense in the world. That should be supported by a system of strong municipalities. But I sincerely caution you. I believe that Bill 103 will give you a less competitive Metro, a less competitive Toronto and a less competitive Ontario.

**The Chair:** Thank you. There's time for Mr Silipo, three and a half minutes.

**Mr Silipo:** Mr Chair, I would be more than happy if the government caucus was interested in asking Mr Wendell Cox some questions. I'd be happy to give the time over to them.

**The Chair:** It's up to you; you can give up your time.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Mr Cox, for your presentation before us here today. It's always interesting having

someone like you, who makes as a profession the consulting to municipalities on topics such as this, but we have articles from people such as Neil Pierce, who suggests — he calls them city-states, and basically goes on to say that urban centres a lot like Metro Toronto are absolutely essential in the future if a city like Toronto is going to be competitive on the world stage, if it's going to be able to attract investment and jobs.

Clearly, you've formed an opinion based on what you've seen, but so have experts formed one that's totally contrary. Even Jane Jacobs, who is a well-renowned urban planner, continues to say half a million's the threshold. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I believe you've said up to a million is the threshold before there are diseconomies. Clearly, the experts don't agree on what the final shape should be.

Would you not at least concede that given the fact that the six mayors could not put together a plan with any unanimity, their own vision on how to achieve those savings, that at some point the provincial government had a responsibility to act?

**Mr Cox:** No, not at all. A couple of thoughts. One, with respect to Mr Pierce, he has done no research whatsoever on the subject of amalgamation. He is operating from a philosophical position that he believes amalgamation is a good thing, the typical city planning, regional planning kind of view that it is a good thing. The fact is that Atlanta is not an amalgamated city and got the last Olympics. Sydney is not an amalgamation and got the next. I don't buy the theories of Mr Pierce, whom I know, at all.

Andrew Sancton, at the University of Western Ontario, has done a good deal of research and shown convincingly that there is not a shred of evidence anywhere that cost savings accrue from amalgamation.

Forgive me for being quite so strong, but if I were a member of your government interested in reducing the costs of municipal government, I would impose mandatory competitive tendering, as the Victoria government has done and as the English government has done. These are things that save real money and save amounts of money that are far beyond the maximum 2% saving you could achieve assuming that none of these other dynamics I'm talking about would occur.

**Mr Gilchrist:** It's interesting, and just for the record I agree with you. We've had the opposition parties and many other critics dismiss that portion of the KPMG report. Whatever its other flaws or successes, it does say that one of the areas in which the new city could find tremendous savings is to do just that. At least we've got some common ground there.

On the flip side — let me continue on the earlier point — you suggest that Mr Pierce may not have looked at things from the purview of whether the cities themselves were amalgamated. Have you any evidence to show that the reverse is true, that by amalgamating you lose all those advantages that he says accrue to an urban centre that focuses as a core to develop a particular industry or to exploit a particular geographical reality? This, by the way, is the case here in Toronto. It's as much our location as anything else that has accrued to the

historical expansion here in Metro Toronto. Where is the evidence that shows that by amalgamating we lose?

**Mr Cox:** There is no evidence because nobody has done any serious amalgamating in recent years. Maggie Thatcher broke up London. They dismantled regional government in Copenhagen. I think there's a general feeling that amalgamation is not necessary for the kinds of international competitiveness issues that you raise.

Let me also suggest with respect to the issue of competitive tendering — no argument with you whatsoever on competitive tendering. You're absolutely right. The fact is that competitive tendering can be done in the current governance structure or by a future governance structure. My point is that when you get to a city of 2.4 million people with strong labour unions, which you have here, there is no chance that you are ever going to see significant competitive tendering occur.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Cox, for coming forward and making a presentation.

1700

#### DOUG BREWER

**The Chair:** Would Doug Brewer please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Brewer. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Doug Brewer:** Good afternoon, Chair, ladies and gentlemen. I'm very pleased to have the opportunity today to address this committee on Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act. This is the first time I've ever felt motivated to speak before a committee of the Ontario Legislature, and I only do so now because of the great importance of this act and the ramifications for our great city.

I care greatly about the kind of city my children will grow up in, the quality of their schools, the libraries, the hockey arenas, the parks and the services offered by my municipality. I worry about whether the city is safe and whether it will be in the future. I worry about the homeless I pass on my way to work, and since I have employment, I wonder whether my job will last and if there will be enough left of my paycheque to pay all my bills after taxes.

Toronto city council, Metro council and the provincial government are spending my hard-earned tax dollars telling me how important Bill 103 is, and I've decided to educate myself. I have attended public meetings on amalgamation and listened carefully to the debates. I've read the literature handed out at these meetings, including the piece printed by NDP caucus services, and I have read the material available from the government. I have visited the Web sites of all three levels of government and I have downloaded the myriad of information available. I've even read the three daily newspapers on the issue, although there doesn't seem to be a clear consensus found there.

I've spoken to city of Toronto councillors and Metro councillors in an attempt to better understand this issue, but the only thing I'm sure of, after listening to all these people, is that none of them speak for me or my family.

We are besieged with conflicting opinions on amalgamation. Some fear it will cause the deterioration of our city; some point to a brighter future. The issue becomes one of trust.

When I vote, and I always vote, I look for three important qualities in the politicians I will vote for. My representatives must be able to demonstrate vision; they must be able to think long term and to plan for the future. I've seen the results of living for today, and we can't afford it. We always end up cleaning up the messes we've left.

I also look for integrity in politicians. They must believe in what they're doing and they must convince me that they will try to fulfil the promises they have made. They must do what they think is right and steadfastly stick to their guns even when the opposition is great.

Finally, I look for performance. Great promises, even if politicians believe them personally, are meaningless if they can't make them happen once they're elected.

Vision, guts and trust are the key ingredients I look for, and all too often I find that I have to rely on these qualities to make decisions on issues.

It's impossible to know for sure what will happen to our great city after amalgamation. My first instinct was to support the government on this issue because I found their arguments persuasive. My taxes are too high, and it made sense to me that restructuring and eliminating a level of bureaucracy would save money. "Moving from seven governments to one will remove unnecessary duplication and overlaps." That made sense to me. I have seen the benefits to the bottom line when businesses consolidate.

But some Toronto and Metro councillors were telling me this was going to cost me more money in taxes. I spoke to some of them and got completely different answers about how and why my taxes were going to go up. Not convinced, I asked a Metro councillor to explain why her numbers were completely at odds with the numbers I had retrieved from the Metro Toronto Web site.

There was a very interesting analysis to be found on the Web site entitled "Estimated Savings from Service Integration in a Unified Toronto." This analysis suggested in detail where savings could come from. Metro's study suggested savings could come from fire services, public health, library boards, building inspections, public works, transportation, parks and recreation, planning and the consolidation of general government services. It also stated that all these savings were possible without reducing service. Then their analysis stated the overall savings would be in excess of \$200 million per year.

The Metro councillor I spoke with wasn't even aware of this study or this information and had no rational explanation as to why I shouldn't believe it. I wondered, therefore, why she would be speaking on amalgamation at public meetings without taking the time to better inform herself about the study done by her own level of government.

I then looked at the mayors' proposal, which suggested eliminating duplication of services, cutting the number of politicians, improving cooperation throughout the GTA, and that it would save \$240 million per year. Once again I was struck by the similarity in their estimates of how much money could be saved by consolidating. Their plan probably would have been better than the status quo, but I think that one municipal government would be able to

work together much better than six. Besides, how much can you trust those who had no plan for integrating to save tax dollars until their own jobs were on the line?

I have read that Allan Lamport, a former mayor of Toronto, suggested the same thing when he said: "I have the greatest respect for our elected officials and I can't blame the people in office trying to stay in office. But the fact is that Metro is one city, but it has seven city halls, six mayors and a chairman, and seven huge administrations that are costly. This shows how things have gotten out of hand."

I decided to accept the province's savings estimates because all three levels had numbers that were comparable and it made sense that consolidating would save money. But there's more to municipal governance than saving money. Opponents of Bill 103 have suggested many other potential pitfalls on the amalgamation road. Unfortunately, the issue they talk about most is actual value assessment, or market value assessment, and the possible increase in property taxes as a result.

I was appalled at the lack of understanding of the tax issue by elected representatives; and worse, Bill 103 isn't about AVA or MVA or privatizing the Beer Store. There are a lot of things it's not about. It is about one unified Toronto. The property tax issue is an important one, and perhaps I'll come back to talk to this committee again in the future about AVA or MVA. These hearings are about amalgamation, and virtually everyone concedes that amalgamation will save money, quite a lot of it, and that will lower property taxes.

Another issue that comes up frequently is that of community spirit and neighbourhoods. I thought about that, but when I started thinking about the distinctive nature of Toronto's neighbourhoods, I couldn't see that they followed any existing political boundaries. Yorkville or Chinatown are distinctive, but they are made distinctive by the people who live there. They don't need to be cities or boroughs to remain that way.

The issues that concern my family are the ones that relate to the potential decay of our inner city. I don't want to live in New York or Chicago, although their hockey teams are better. Toronto is the best large city in the world to work in and to raise a family, and I want to keep it that way. But we can't allow it to stagnate. We must focus on the important issues if we are to keep Toronto vibrant.

Transit, welfare, housing and health care are the issues that are important, and these issues are featured heavily in the anti-amalgamation material available. All of them suggest that higher taxes will put these things at risk. I can understand that. Higher taxes will put my family at risk. But since amalgamation will save dollars, doesn't it then follow that we will be better able to afford the services that help make Toronto a caring place? You can't help the poor by bankrupting everyone. A prosperous, strong, unified Toronto that provides opportunity will continue to reach out to help those in society who need the help, and the integrating of services Metro-wide should make delivery more efficient.

In short, I found that most of the opposition to Bill 103 is from people with a vested interest in the status quo, like CUPE, or councillors who wouldn't stand a

chance of being elected under the new boundaries, and from naysayers, people who said that the tax cut last year would decrease revenue and cost jobs. We have seen that the government was right, that lowering taxes increases revenues, spurs growth and creates jobs.

I also discovered throughout this process how confusing the current political system is in Metro. Most of my friends don't have the faintest idea which level of government picks up their garbage, which plows their streets, which ward they live in or who their local or Metro councillors are. Many are unsure about the various federal and provincial riding boundaries.

Opponents of this bill suggest that a loss of representation and a loss of accountability will result from these changes. To be held accountable, as these municipal politicians suggest, the political system must be easily understood by the electorate, who are very busy trying to earn enough money to pay their taxes.

**The Chair:** Mr Brewer, I'm going to have to ask you to wind up to maintain your allotted time.

**Mr Brewer:** It is impossible to know for sure what will happen to our great city after amalgamation. The future is always unknown. You have two options: You can support the opponents of this plan, who have no plan, no vision and no credibility; or you can support the government, who have a plan, have the guts to follow through because they believe in it and have maintained, through fulfilling their promises, the trust of the electorate. As for me and my house, we support Bill 103.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Brewer, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

1710

### KAREN VAUX

**The Chair:** Would Karen Vaux please come forward. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Karen Vaux:** My name is Karen Vaux. I have lived in North York for 18 years, and in the past two years I've lived in the city of Toronto. I went to university at Ryerson, which is in downtown Toronto, and I studied economics and geography.

I just want to begin by saying that I'm in total support of Bill 103, as I believe many other people are. A lot of these other people aren't going to come to these hearings because they're probably working hard and they believe it's going to be passed, so there's no reason for them to dispute this.

In Canada the British North America Act of 1867 states explicitly that provincial legislatures have sovereignty over municipal institutions and since the 1950s, as the country has become more urbanized, the provincial governments have been paying more attention to municipalities and their problems.

Provincial legislatures can implement new forms of local government and change the functions of local government through the actions of provincial parliaments and, although we may not want to antagonize too many voters in a local area, the majority party is responsible to the province as a whole, not just to a particular municipality.

Since 1970, Toronto has become suburbanized to an extent that was rarely thought of even in the mid-1950s, although it is tempting to consider these suburban areas as outer cities with characteristics somewhat independent from those in the inner city. A corollary to the major theme of decentralization is that the suburbs are linked to the central city and the future of Toronto depends on a more coordinated management of all its parts, suburbs included.

Local government issues impinge directly upon everybody's daily life. It is one of the main tasks of urban government to ensure that all services and opportunities which have jurisdiction are available to all the inhabitants of an urban area. For the past 43 years, a Metro-wide government has propelled our growth, providing emergency services, an expanding network of community and social services, and has done so smoothly and accurately, so well that there is an inherent misconception which exists in Toronto that citizens think it is their local cities and mayors that provide many of these services. In reality, Metro regional government already delivers almost three quarters of the services on an amalgamated basis right now. Bill 103 and one unified city will be able to fulfil delivery of the other quarter of services.

With respect to neighbourhoods, we cannot forget that culture and ethnicity are profound factors that went into shaping Toronto. The Toronto experience is the product of mobility, with people coming from many different parts of the world and bringing with them a variety of cultural backgrounds. When people settle they move into a neighbourhood, not a ward or a municipality. Hence, we have Little Italy, Little Portugal, Chinatown, Greektown, to name a few. If you haven't already noticed, these neighbourhoods generally transcend municipal boundaries. Most social spaces within urban areas arise from a wide variety of cultural and economic attributes of individuals and households.

In this proposed system it will be important to ensure that planning reflects community needs. Bill 103 will provide consultation under the direction of the transition team on how the incorporation of community needs and the planning process can best be accomplished. The new city of Toronto will have community councils whereby each councillor will establish volunteer neighbourhood committees that will let citizens get directly involved with the municipal government.

These types of committees work well across Canada and the United States and they will be effective in keeping city council aware of local needs, local issues and local priorities. These volunteer neighbourhood committees are a way that local government remains in touch with the needs and desires of local residents, a way that local neighbourhood identity is preserved, a way that everyone can contribute to the future of their city, a way that local representation, participation and decision-making are possible.

In the context of the Metro government, what is needed to address many disparities between all the municipal governments is policies. The extent to which these policies are possible depends not only on the willingness of the governments to implement corrective policies but also on their ability to do so. This government has that

mandate and it is about time that democratically elected government makes these needed changes.

With respect to taxes, a unified Toronto will be able to look at the physical and social structures of the entire area and make tax decisions that make sense for property owners and small businesses across the city. Taxes levied on property are a good and sound measure of taxation as long as the value of the property is fairly assessed and the property itself is a true measure of an individual's or a family's wealth.

This provincial government is making changes to the current outdated and inconsistent tax system. This will bring fairness and equity across the Metro area, putting residents throughout the unified city on a level playing field. As part of the changes, municipalities will be able to offer special consideration for certain sectors, including small commercial properties. In 1986, there were approximately 4,835 units of general government and special districts existing in the 10 provinces and this figure does not include the many subordinate agencies of local government that often act as if they were governmental units, for example, school boards.

The profusion of local governments in the Toronto area is enormous. Although Metropolitan Toronto consists of a federation of five municipalities and one central city, there are also 94 special-body governments that are variously concerned with providing services, management, regulation and utilities. This confusing and highly fragmented pattern of local government here in Toronto is considered by other cities and countries as a numerical nightmare and almost impossible to comprehend.

Let's take a look at those figures for a moment. Currently 106 politicians make \$5.9 million per year, which is a low-ball figure, given their staff and office perks. In the new structure, 44 councillors plus a mayor will save \$3.6 million a year on salaries alone and will do the job just as effectively.

The shortcomings of the various ways local governments raise funds, even the regressive nature of the property tax itself, will be less pronounced if only the taxes are applied on a uniform basis throughout the metropolitan area. The fact that they are not is due in large part to the proliferation and fragmentation of local government areas.

One of the problems that stems from these disparities is the fact that in order to raise funds, local governments are often found to pursue conflicting rather than cooperative policies in service provision. In fact, far from cooperating with each other, local governments within the Toronto area compete for acceptable tax-yielding economic activities.

If you combined the planning departments of Metro and Toronto, you would save almost \$16 million. Moving from seven governments to one will remove unnecessary duplication and overlap. It will save about \$100 million a year beginning in 1998.

The very nature of many urban problems is such that they cannot be handled effectively by a large number of small local governments acting in isolation. Although this high degree of political fragmentation may be defended on the grounds of continuing the democratic tradition of home rule, it can also be deplored as being hopelessly unsuited to the realities of modern Toronto life. Because

of this, many urgent problems have remained difficult to solve and will inevitably continue to do so unless Bill 103 gets passed.

For the first time in Metropolitan Toronto, how services are delivered and where facilities are located will be based on what makes sense from the perspective of cost and local service needs. Decisions won't be constrained by the present artificial municipal boundaries. The new municipality will be able to start with a clean slate and take full advantage of the best ideas in government innovation on how to do better with less.

From what I understand, services that need to be delivered closest to the community will continue to be delivered locally. These include such things as planning approvals, day care, libraries, building permits and recreation. In fact, we will more than likely notice very little change. The big change will be that the system will be more than likely less confusing.

Clearly, in addition to the problems of coordination and economic efficiency, public awareness and control of public bodies are vitally significant. There is little doubt that the public is generally unaware of how many different units of local government influence their daily lives. Obviously, this is evident by the very low voter turnout for local elections for representatives of such boards. The dilemma of local finance and the fragmentation of local government units is at the heart of problems facing Toronto today. Bill 103 will address many of these problems and provide many of their solutions.

One of the bill's clauses involves the transfer of the responsibilities to or from the provincial level to or from the local level. This general proposal is based upon the fact that local government has accepted social responsibilities that are handled by other levels of government elsewhere and that many of the social responsibilities yield benefits for the wider area beyond that under the jurisdiction of the local government involved. Good examples of responsibilities that are increasingly being administered and funded by the province are education and the hospitals.

**The Chair:** Ms Vaux, I'm sorry to interrupt, but we're getting towards the end of your time, and I'd appreciate it if you'd try to wrap up at some point.

**Ms Vaux:** I can think of a few good reasons why this unified Toronto will help us evolve and propel us into the global future. It will save us money. It will reduce duplication and overlap. It will be a simpler, more accountable, less confusing system of local government. Communities will have more influence over local decisions. It will reduce the physical size of government. A new council will be able to make better decisions. A unified Toronto will have more clout internationally. It builds on already excellent infrastructure. Opportunities such as the Olympics will no longer be lost. Lastly, Toronto is definitely the best place on earth to live.

In conclusion, this government, through Bill 103, will be creating a more cost-effective and accountable government, and we will enjoy indirect benefits through economic growth resulting from a more competitive Toronto.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for your presentation to the committee tonight. Would Emilia Valentini please come forward. No.

1720

**HOTEL ASSOCIATION  
OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO**

**The Chair:** I know Mr Seiling's here from the Hotel Association of Metropolitan Toronto. Good afternoon, Mr Seiling. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Rod Seiling:** I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today on Bill 103 on behalf of the hotel and hospitality industry. As you know, my name is Rod Seiling. I'm the president of the Hotel Association of Metropolitan Toronto, or HAMT, as it is more often called. I should add that I'm a resident and taxpayer of Etobicoke, and of course Mr Ford here is my MPP.

As an aside, I should say that I am not pleased, as a taxpayer, at the unsophisticated, undemocratic method that is currently being put in place to, should I say, take the temperature of citizens as we approach March 3 as to whether they're in favour or not in favour of Bill 103. I think it is unfair and is certainly not a democratic process the way it has been undertaken.

HAMT's members operate approximately 32,000 rooms, employ over 18,000 people on a full-time basis and generate around \$1.22 billion annually in economic activity. Hotels are a subsector of the tourism industry, Toronto's second-largest industry. Tourism represents 100,000 jobs, \$5 billion in economic activity and attracts some 22 million visitors annually. A great amount of this activity is classed as export as it represents sales outside of this country.

Bill 103 deals specifically, and I want to emphasize specifically, with the amalgamation of seven municipalities into one. It is not about property tax reform, it is not about education reform, it is not about other reforms the government of the day has proposed, as some people would like others to believe. HAMT, on behalf of its members, supports this legislation as we believe it is the appropriate decision at the appropriate time. It is a natural evolution flowing from the 1953 decision to create Metropolitan Toronto. The 1953 system of government has served us well. It's broke. Even the city of Toronto and its residents in a 1991 plebiscite are on record to this fact. Delay and further study will only exacerbate the current problems, not move us any further to a better solution.

This bill confers a number of benefits from our perspective, including increased efficiencies. The public sector must, just as hotels have been forced to do, learn to operate in the most efficient and effective manner reasonably possible. Increased efficiency will help to ensure that we're able to provide the services necessary to maintain the qualities identified with our city that makes it the number one place to live according to Fortune magazine.

Much has been made that with the new uni-city we will lose our identity and accountability. A number of our members have asked their employees if they knew who their municipal councillors were and who was responsible for what. The vast majority could not name their councillor or were not aware of what level of government was responsible for the various services.

I might add that having been involved in municipal elections in the region, I can personally attest to this fact.

People generally do not understand the current system as to what level of local government does what or who their respective councillor is. Given this level of awareness, we only see improvement in this area once the legislation is passed. We suggest that with increased awareness comes increased accountability and with increased accountability comes increased responsiveness.

It is interesting to note people are suggesting that this legislation will cause a loss of identity and community. This is déjà vu, say those individuals who remember the previous amalgamation debates. Swansea, Forest Hill, Rosedale, Islington, just to name a few, still exist quite nicely as communities within. The facts do not support this logic of opponents. Neighbourhoods are created by people, not politicians. The ability to create communities, we suggest, is not related to the ability to govern. Livable communities are a byproduct of good government of course. It's the people who elect politicians. They are responsible and must hold accountable the politicians they elect. Under Bill 103, they still maintain that right and responsibility.

If tourism is one thing, it is economic development. It is universally recognized that this activity is best delivered by a common body acting on behalf of one economic, homogeneous city. You will note that I have only referenced Toronto as a single entity because from a tourism perspective, that is how we operate. Our customers don't come to visit Etobicoke, North York, York, East York or Scarborough; they come to Toronto.

Tourism has prospered because it has been supported and operated on a region-wide basis. Metropolitan Toronto has been a major supporter and deserves a great deal of the credit for the successes to date, even though it is now cutting back on that support. The alternative to having to depend on individual cities for this critical support, especially based on past performance, does not bode well for the industry or for the thousands of people who depend on our industry for their livelihood. The respective cities' financial support, which generates millions of dollars for their respective treasuries, has, with the exception of the city of Toronto, been conspicuous by their absence in their support for the tourism industry.

The city's visitors and convention marketing arm, Tourism Toronto, recognized that tourism was a Toronto phenomenon two years ago when it dropped its former name, the Metropolitan Toronto Convention and Visitors Association. You might say our marketing organization, which comprises people from all across this city, was a leader in recognizing the benefits of operating in a unified and amalgamated manner.

Based on past experience, hotels see other benefits emanating from Bill 103. From a competitive perspective, we see it as essential that with property tax reform and variable tax rates coming for 1998, we have one city. Hotels have been discriminated against by an unfair property tax system for over 25 years. This discrimination was exacerbated by the inability of the respective municipalities to agree on a method of property tax reform. They were held hostage. The result was an industry that became economically non-viable because of the discriminatory property tax system.

Fortunately, this inequity will be eliminated once the property tax reform legislation, Bill 106, is passed. With municipalities' ability to have variable tax rates, formerly called mill rates, that long-sought-after fairness and level playing field could be negated. With that, owners' ability to finally commence needed capital reinvestment in their properties, including the creation of new jobs, would disappear as well.

One city will benefit our industry and many other businesses by ensuring we operate under one set of regulations that are applied fairly and evenly to everyone within the city. Currently speaking, that is not the case. For example, one city benefits the hotel industry as it relates to fire safety inspections. Fire safety is a major concern for all hoteliers. The responsibility for these inspections resides with the respective municipality; therefore, it is important that they be both thorough and consistent.

Hotels compete with one another, so it is important they all be treated equally from this regulatory perspective. Given that a problem with one in an area like this is a problem for them all from a public relations perspective, it is vital that these inspections be both professional and fair for every hotel across the city. One city will be able to fulfil this mandate better than a number of individual fire departments and do it in a more cost-effective manner.

Currently speaking, we have six different smoking bylaws in Metropolitan Toronto. My purpose in raising this issue is not to argue the rationale for freedom of choice, but to point out the negative impacts flowing from an uncoordinated set of regulations. It is an example that is current and top of mind.

The individual cities have demonstrated that they cannot or will not work together to ensure their regulatory structures are in sync with one another. The net result is an unlevel playing field where winners and losers are determined by a superficial set of rules imposed without consideration for the economic viability of the businesses across the city involved or the jobs that may be at risk. Lost in all of this uncoordinated regulatory activity is the potential negative impact on businesses, and in our specific case, tourism and hospitality.

I referenced earlier the unfair property tax system that hotels within Metro were forced to endure. It took HAMT over one year to see the respective councils as part of this process the association undertook to try and achieve a fair property tax system. To their credit, I might add, the respective municipalities were all supportive. However, the real issue here is the lost time this exercise took. If we had been able to secure this local support in a timely manner, one could speculate the previous government may have acted positively on this matter as per the recommendation of their own Fair Tax Commission report. As it was, the election came along and the industry was forced to wait.

The fallout from this unnecessary delay was more bankruptcies, lost jobs and postponed needed capital reinvestment. Seven different levels of government add to the red tape and delay that businesses and individuals must wade through in their dealing with local government. One level will allow us all a better utilization of our resources, and this is the perfect case in point.

A unified city will make us a stronger, more effective city able to better hold its own in the global marketplace. As much as we may want to wish for the good old days and to maintain the status quo, we cannot. If we want to ensure that we can create the jobs and produce the resources that will be required to grow and prosper as a community, we need to get our house in order, and this bill is a good start. We cannot accept a structure of local government which has proved itself incapable of meeting these basic objectives.

### 1730

We need to get on with the job at hand now. We cannot afford to wait for more studies. The issues are there and have been before us for some time. Now is the time for action. "More study" and "extra time" are only code words to kill this legislation by slow death. The respective cities have had time to come up with a better solution. This issue has not suddenly come from nowhere. Let us get on with building a better community for all of us to live and work in, one that we will continue to be proud of, and one that tourists will want to visit again and again. Thank you very much.

**Mr Hastings:** Thank you, Mr Seiling, for coming in today. You reference quite a bit in your presentation about the new proposed unified city as an opportunity for job creation. I've contended that some of the barriers in the existing bylaws of the seven different governments that we have in Metro Toronto are blockages to job creation. Can you cite other specific examples of how some degree of harmonization of bylaws over time — because it's going to take considerable time to bring that about — could increase the climate for job creation in the tourism industry in Metro?

**Mr Seiling:** Certainly, Mr Hastings. There are a number of things we can talk about: controls on the airport, for one, one you'd be very familiar with; controls over building codes; inspections, whether they be property inspections or fire inspections. As I related earlier, we have examples where in one part of the city your garbage has to be in a totally enclosed, sprinkled enclosure attached to your building. They are examples of unfair competition.

Hotels want to compete on a level playing field. They all compete for tourists, for those customers, but to be truly competitive over the long term, it makes no sense for one to have an advantage that's been given to them by a regulation or a bylaw that favours one over the other, because ultimately it hampers investment in the industry, it hampers job creation. We're an industry that, if you create demand, we hire people immediately. There is no time lag. We certainly have proven that worldwide this is a destination that people want to come to. It's simply getting our message out. The infrastructure is here, the supply is here, so it's getting back to reinvesting in our properties, and part of that has been hampered by the inefficiency.

Of course, I've left out the prime example, the smoking bylaw. It's had a detrimental impact and North York, after three weeks, had to do something about it. It's proven in other jurisdictions — and I'm not here to debate the ethics of the bylaw itself, just to point out that six different bylaws in one city doesn't make any sense.

**Mr Hastings:** We have a lot of people come into these hearings and point out that Toronto is a mecca for tourism, for job creation, the new economy. They quote back to us the Fortune magazine article in their own particular context. Could you inform us, under the existing property tax system, without any reform, how many bankruptcies we've had in the hotel industry throughout Metropolitan Toronto in the last, say, three years?

**Mr Seiling:** We don't have enough time. You'll cut me off before I get through them. But in very recent memory, 15 or 20 easily, and these are major hotels. There have been millions and millions of dollars of investment income forced out, lost totally, thousands of jobs lost. We're ready, willing and able to proceed onward, and hoteliers have had the wherewithal to move forward.

**Mr Marchese:** Were you talking about the Island Airport before? Which airport were you talking about?

**Mr Seiling:** I didn't reference either airport, I just said airports in general.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. Is there one quick question here?

**Mr Ford:** Mr Seiling, you're convinced that contacting one central source in all these unified cities would be much better and you could have better communication, better access and better PR work for the tourist industry?

**Ms Seiling:** Much so. Tourism in Toronto has already proven that. The industry has moved to that already and it's proven to be very successful, so we have a model in place that's working and it's recognized as one of the better convention/visitors bureaus in North America and in the world.

**Mr Ford:** Yours is probably one of the biggest industries in Toronto, isn't it?

**Mr Seiling:** We're the second-largest industry in Toronto.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Seiling, for being here today with us.

I'd just like to see if Emilia Valentini is here. Okay.

#### TORONTO-CENTRAL ONTARIO BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

**The Vice-Chair:** Could we move on, then, to the Toronto-Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council, please. Good afternoon, gentlemen, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr John Cartwright:** My name is John Cartwright. I'm the business manager/financial secretary of the Toronto-Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council, and with me is Mr James Love, who is the president of the council.

The Toronto-Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council represents 40,000 skilled tradesmen and women in the greater Toronto area. We are making this presentation because of our strong concerns about the impact of amalgamation as envisaged in Bill 103. We are also concerned about the process imposed by the bill and the apparent unwillingness of the government to alter the direction of this legislation. Nevertheless, in the hope that our views may be at least listened to by the committee, we offer the following comments.

Over the past five years our council has been actively involved in numerous discussions and deliberations about the nature of the greater Toronto area, its governance and its ability to deliver the services for both its residents and businesses that operate in the region. We came to this as a result of our involvement in the Metro Jobstart Coalition, a construction industry lobby that represented management and labour in attempting to kickstart construction investment in Toronto. During this time we have examined a variety of studies and proposals for ensuring healthy growth patterns in the region, while providing adequate financial resources for infrastructure.

The crucial issue that seemed to hang over all of the discussion was the differential in commercial tax rates between Metro and the surrounding municipalities in the GTA. The fear of the hole-in-the-doughnut scenario — and I assume people in the committee are familiar with that expression — was highlighted by the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto and the development industry in talks about business and industry leaving the downtown core, and also North York, in order to go north of Steeles or west of 27, where there's a lower commercial tax rate. That was the issue that bedevilled policymakers and planners over the last five to six years, since the recession came into Toronto.

Clearly the solution involved some form of equalization of tax burden of the services provided by Metro that benefit the entire region. As well, some form of coordination of transit and other services was desirable. Everyone, from the GTA mayors to the Golden commission to David Crombie, emphasized that the problem is a region-wide issue. It's not a Metro issue; it is a region- and GTA-wide issue.

For us, what is most striking about Bill 103 then is that nowhere in any of these numerous studies was a megacity, as in Bill 103, put forward as the solution. Even Metro council has not suggested this design that's in front of you and that we have, up to this date, still heard from the government and the minister involved they're not willing to move off of.

So the first question that needs answering before we feel it's proper to embark on this massive restructuring exercise is, where did the plan come from? How has the government concluded that this reshaping of Canada's largest urban centre is appropriate and on what studies — particular studies, not hunches, but on what studies — did it base its conclusion?

We are not trying to score cheap political points in asking these questions. The fact is that by and large Toronto works remarkably well, regardless of the endorsement of Fortune magazine. It is the most multicultural city in the world and has managed to draw strength from dozens of different cultures, in contrast to the fractious experience of many other large cities. All of us must be very wary of the impact that dramatic change will have on such a finely balanced community of communities.

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For us this is not an abstract issue. The people we represent, the construction trades that have built all of Metropolitan Toronto and the greater Toronto area, are a tremendously diverse workforce. Most of our members

have chosen to come to this land with their skills and put their lives on the line day in and day out to build what's around them, and they work beside people who have come from every other part of the world, as well as Canadian-born, to do that. We are keenly aware of the difficulties that were faced over the years by each wave of workers who chose to bring their skills here and build the cities.

What is remarkable about Toronto — I'm not talking about the city of Toronto, I'm talking about Metro Toronto — is that as each wave of immigrants came here, because local government was small enough, they were able to find political, economic and social space within the communities here and have a sense of being able to influence governance and influence what happened in their cities. That's a tremendously important thing that I worry people haven't given enough thought to. That meant that everybody had a buy-in. With the multicultural cities that we find in Metro Toronto we have a balance, where everybody has had a buy-in because they've had a political way to express what's important to them. The Irish wave of immigrants, the Italian, the West Indian, the Chinese, the Portuguese have all, with a local government, found a way to have their issues, their interests and their concerns addressed.

The traditions of governance that have developed cannot be swept aside in favour of a simplistic blueprint that may fall far short of its designers' best intentions. Regardless of how well your intentions are, I need to caution you that we may be in for something we don't understand, how it will unravel if we move into a megacity and destroy the very fragile balance of governance that we've developed.

It is for this reason that we are particularly concerned with the obsessive haste with which the government is pursuing its vision. Mistakes made in the design of a structure governing a population larger than six of Canada's provinces will have significant consequences. To rush the process in order to satisfy an arbitrary time line is not, I'm afraid, the mark of mature governance, and I worry about that. I hope that you would also share our concerns about that.

Furthermore, it's clear that Bill 103 cannot be viewed in isolation. The downloading of service obligations is part, in our opinion, of the same package. It may not be the same bill but it's certainly part of the same restructuring package, including the school boards. To date, estimates of extra costs to the people of Metro start at half a billion dollars and they go up from there. Even if the government were to amend its most contentious proposals, drawing money from the Metro tax base is an integral part of the restructuring goal of this province.

In analysing the announcements of mega-week, we come to the conclusion that Bill 103 and its companion pieces are about two things: The first is money and the second is power.

Issue one, money: Since day one of this debate, many observers have identified the downloading of costs as a key objective of the province. This has now become clear. Through cutbacks in transfers and unilateral reduction of shared costs, millions of dollars of service obligations have been dumped on to municipalities. The claim

by some that the savings in efficiencies will balance the new costs is simply not credible.

I want to talk about our experience in the last couple of years in trying to get the Sheppard subway built and also the subway to the airport. The previous speaker talked about the importance of tourism and convention business to this area, and rapid transit to the airport is an integral part of that. As we in the construction industry tried for the last four and five years to persuade Metropolitan Toronto and its councillors to fund those, we were always faced with the notion of a tax crunch, that in the last year and a half they were constantly afraid of further downloading from the province. They could not possibly afford to build a subway, let alone two subways, because of the unknown future.

What is guaranteed out of the downloading, even if we remove welfare, is an uncertainty that will bedevil a new governance structure, that will make it very difficult, if not impossible, to undertake major infrastructure investments, particularly that our members rely on, as we develop the future of this area.

The new burden will have to be borne by someone, most likely the homeowner, through increased property taxes. Given the inequity in commercial tax levels between Metro and the surrounding GTA cities, it is unthinkable that this difference would be allowed to increase even further. But Bill 103 does nothing to fix this particular crisis, which is the one that started the entire discussion and was supposed to have been the motivator for all of the reform.

The second issue is about power. The drastic reduction in elected representatives who are accountable to residents will do far more than just save a few salaries. Anne Golden, I think in a piece in the Star, talked about the total salary costs of governance in Metro of all elected officials being less than one half of 1%, so I don't think that's an issue that people should honestly discuss. I think we need to talk about the much larger impacts.

The new structure would be less accessible to ordinary citizens and it would be much more influenced by wealthy power brokers in our society. The cost of running for office will increase significantly to the point that elections will increasingly be financed by corporate interests. You'll have to raise well over \$1 million to run for mayor of the new megacity. You'll have to raise a significant amount of money to run for any council and also the school board.

We have to ask ourselves, why is it in the interest of the overall citizenry that we move to a US style of politics where every elected official is reliant on bagmen who represent special interest groups and lobbyists, be they for the tobacco industry — regardless of the costs of cancer — the development industry or the privatization interests who want to come in and take the spoils of public services? We don't think it's a healthy process to move away from the current level of accessible councillors to ones who will only be accessible by people who have a significant amount of money and power.

The pressure to contract out or privatize public services due to budget pressures will be augmented by the political pressure of corporate donors who expect to be rewarded with new business opportunities. Is that crying

wolf? We don't think so. It's clear, in the direction that this government has talked about and some others have talked about, that there is an expectation by major mostly transnational corporations to come in and take over public services and to add that as part of their business assets and the bottom line in their own corporations.

The KPMG report, commissioned by the province to support its proposals, identifies at least 4,500 jobs that will be lost. That may not be an issue to the accountant putting that report together — he only had a couple of weeks to do it and he was already given his instructions on what he had to come up with — but to the 4,500 people, they are being thrown out into an unemployment level in the job market of still 9.4%, and that's not going down. That's not a solution we relish even though that won't be our members, but we don't think working people deserve to be thrown on the scrapheap as part of a grand design by the bean counters when at the same time there's less and less accountability by politicians to those same working people where they live.

To us the most disturbing element of the bill is the power handed over to the trustees and the transition team. It is completely inappropriate to have provincially appointed officials vested with the authority to override our elected municipal representatives. The influence they will have through the hiring of key personnel and determining policies is quite staggering. I know that's a dialogue taking place between the minister and a number of mayors and other councillors, but that's a concern that is enunciated even by those people on Metro council who may prefer to see some form of amalgamation. There is not a single municipal politician I'm aware of who welcomes interference by the transition team and trustees, particularly in hiring, in contracts that cannot be undone and particularly in making decisions that cannot be reviewed by any court.

To conclude, it is the position of our council that Bill 103 should be withdrawn and a meaningful process of consultation entered into with the municipalities in the greater Toronto area. That doesn't mean years and years of more studies. It means there has to be a responsive process that has some integrity, that's seen by all the major stakeholders in this piece as having integrity and where the ears are actually open.

Of greatest concern to us is that it seems the minister has decided on a particular model and there has not been, for whatever reason, whether it be caucus solidarity or the sense of urgency of time, a genuine openness to changing the direction, to looking at different models, to looking at the studies I see listed in the back of this, which was put in my door — all of those studies — and at what those studies say. It's a real concern to us that we're moving on this thing without the ability to have a proper consultation process.

The goal for us at that consultation would be to establish a useful region-wide structure that can coordinate key services, such as transit and utilities, while maintaining the main local municipalities. I want to be clear about one thing. Our council is not in favour of scrapping Metro, nor are we in favour of scrapping the cities. We think both are still valuable and that the balance that has played between the responsibilities has

allowed us to maintain a healthy civic government in the Metropolitan Toronto area.

We need to involve the GTA in coordination and we need to involve the GTA in levelling the commercial tax.

For us this model that I've just outlined at the very end would enable Toronto to maintain its enviable record as one of the best communities in the world in which to live and work. We urge the committee to please give very serious thought and consideration to exactly the immensity of the exercise they're involved in.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. That concludes this sitting. We will be adjourned until 7 pm.

*The committee recessed from 1752 to 1901.*

### OLIVIA CHOW

**The Vice-Chair:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the standing committee on general government. We're going to begin our evening deputations. I'd like to call on Olivia Chow, please, to come forward. Good evening, Ms Chow. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Ms Olivia Chow:** It will be shorter than 10 minutes. I just spent since yesterday at 2 o'clock debating Bill 103 at Metro council. We just voted. We've talked a lot about it already.

Before I tell you about Metro's position — maybe I'll leave the chairman to do that — let me tell you what's going to happen to the life of a senior post the downloading and how unpleasant a life it's going to be.

Imagine a senior who's living at present in a Metro-run seniors home. This senior will come home one day and notice the fridge is not working. She will call the superintendent to come and get it fixed. The superintendent will say: "We really don't have any money to fix your fridge. Your fridge is really old. You actually need a new fridge, but we've had cutbacks so we'll tinker at it and maybe it'll take another few days to get it fixed." Then a few days later, she'll notice that the elevator is not working and call the superintendent again. The superintendent will say, "Sorry, we had cutbacks, and it'll take another few days to fix." A few days later, the elevators are not fixed and she'll have to walk up the stairs all the time, unfortunately.

She'll also notice that the home visitors, the home-makers that help her out in her home are gone, the Meals on Wheels program has gone and the social worker who's assigned to her building is gone. As a result, the exercise program that's run in the recreation room and the bingo game that's there are no longer there any more because the social worker is gone and no one else is organizing them. That too is gone.

She starts wondering why. She tries to call her councillor and finds out that she can't get through because the local councillor's too busy dealing with parking and zoning a few streets over, and the noise bylaw takes a lot of time, so she can't get through.

When she gets through, the councillor tells her that there's not much he can do for her because there is a transition team that was appointed, and this transition team appointed the commissioner of housing and commissioner of community services, and really there's not much he can do for her.

She starts asking why. Megacity comes with downloading, and this new city of Toronto has found itself saddled with an additional 37,000 units of publicly owned housing, an extra \$365 million worth of housing that it has no money to deal with, another \$230 million worth of repairs to some of these housing units. There's only two words for it. There's no money — no money to fix anything, no money for social housing, no money to allow this senior to live with some dignity.

As she gets older, she probably will need to find a nursing home because she can't live independently any more. She will find that the few homes that she thought were available have been privatized and that the few remaining are too expensive. There will be probably two or three left run by the city of Toronto, but it has a very long waiting list. Nursing home standards will have deteriorated dramatically, partly because of privatization. It's dragging the standards down. Also, the social workers are gone, the nutritionists are gone; they've all been laid off because there's really no money.

What could this poor senior do? This senior will remember that there was a promise of lower taxes but will find herself or maybe her daughter paying higher property taxes, despite the fact that the service level has gone down, and will remember this report that was issued at that time by the Ontario government, the KPMG report, saying, "You will save money." But if you look seriously at this report, and let's look at the sections that seniors are very interested in, primarily policing, for example, the report said, "You could save \$50 million." However, the police chief said there was no way he could save \$50 million. No councillor said you could save \$50 million. No one. Even the Metro auditor at that time said: "You can't save \$50 million. How would you save \$50 million?" Well, lay off 500 officers. That's one way to do it, and that's usually the way the chief and the police services board chair would recommend. This report really, even though it promises a lot, has very little substance in it.

This senior will probably very fondly remember that there was a dental clinic that was run by the public health nurse, and there was a very close relationship with her local councillor and her local mayor. She probably has no idea who the new mayor — oh, she probably knows who the new mayor is, but probably never has met this new mayor, and probably has only seen her on TV. She probably has never met her local councillor either, because like most of Metro councillors in the past, her councillor probably is acclaimed, not elected; well, elected, but acclaimed, because most people by that time are so alienated from their local government that they're not going to participate very much in the election process.

That is the picture I want to paint to you of what's going to happen to our seniors, and I do not believe it's an exaggeration, because if you look at what comes with megacity, it is an entire \$530 million worth of downloading, plus the TTC capital budget in a few years' time and all the social housing repair costs.

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As a result of those concerns, Metro council, about an hour ago, passed a motion saying: "We would support megacity" — that's not a position I support myself —

"but subject to the provincial government demonstrating its commitment that the transfer of financial and service responsibility will be revenue-neutral in Metro; and further, that the province of Ontario enter into negotiations with Metro to ensure that a revenue-neutral solution is achieved." Also, it has recommended, "That the province of Ontario be requested to postpone Bill 103 until January 1, 1999, and that the municipal elections scheduled for November 1997 be postponed until November 1998."

It's interesting that some Metro councillors, especially our chairman, are slightly confused about what is happening. Let me give you an example: Exactly a week ago, at corporate administration committee, a standing committee of Metro Toronto, the chairman and the majority of the councillors on the committee supported Metro's position — it's called No Turning Back — basically advocating for a GTA council, a directly elected, local municipality, two-tier-level government. That was our position last Thursday.

Today our chairman, after three or four working days, has said: "Well, we're not sure now. We've changed our minds. So no, maybe we don't like two-tier government any more. Maybe we'll say yes to a unified city, but it may be the first step towards something else. However, let's postpone it. However, let's work out the revenue-neutral." So Metro's position is quite confused.

**The Vice-Chair:** I must tell you that you have come to the end of your time, if you could just wrap up.

**Ms Chow:** I think I've said enough. Just one more motion that was very interesting was passed. It said, "If the provincial government intends to proceed with the amalgamation, that the local governments be simply amalgamated into the municipality of Metro Toronto in order to minimize transition costs," because after all, you don't need to get rid of Metro. You are in fact incorporating all city councils into Metro. It's seen as a power grab. Anyway, those are the motions that were passed,

I hope you dislike the picture I painted of the seniors because I suspect that's what's going to happen to a lot of seniors.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing this evening.

#### DAVID COLLISTER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on David Collister, please. Good evening, Mr Collister.

**Mr David Collister:** I would like to thank the committee for allowing me to speak today on Bill 103, the megacity bill. I'm here today to ask that the committee stop the passage of this bill, that it not allow it to go on to third reading and that it instead let it die the death it deserves. I believe this bill is inherently flawed and no amount of tinkering will correct its failings. I believe this bill goes wrong in at least two ways: (1) It targets the wrong level of government and (2) it is contrary in spirit to democracy.

First, I'd like to speak on how Bill 103 targets the wrong level of government. In section 27(2), a municipality, a number of cities and one borough are dissolved. I'd like to read that section now:

"27(2) The following municipalities are dissolved:  
 "1. The municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.  
 "2. The borough of East York.  
 "3. The city of Etobicoke.  
 "4. The city of North York.  
 "5. The city of Scarborough.  
 "6. The city of Toronto....  
 "7. The city of York."

Seven municipalities are dissolved under the auspices of reducing duplication.

I'd like to bring the committee's attention to, for example, the city of Etobicoke and the borough of East York. The jurisdictions of these two municipalities do not overlap. East York is responsible for East York and Etobicoke is responsible for Etobicoke. The same holds for North York, Scarborough, Toronto and York. None of the jurisdictions of these cities overlap; there's no duplication between these cities.

However, the jurisdictions of each of these cities do overlap with one other, and I'd like to bring your attention to item 1, the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. This municipality overlaps with each of the prior-mentioned ones. If the government is intent on removing duplication of jurisdiction, Metropolitan Toronto must be the most likely candidate. Which do you think will be more costly: removing a single municipality or trying to consolidate seven of them?

Add on top of that the increased costs of larger amalgamated cities which are indicated by study after study and what we have is not less expense but more — much more. What do the cities of Metropolitan Toronto get in return? Less representation at, less access to and fewer services from local government. Bill 103 destroys local government and saddles the citizens with greater expenses in return. Bill 103 gives the citizens of Metropolitan Toronto less for more.

I would like to make it clear that I'm not against the Metro level of government per se. I think coordinating bodies have a useful role to play, but they should be just that, coordinating, not governing, bodies. The role of Metro and whether its representatives should be elected or selected from local councils, whether it should have enforceable or advisory powers, whether it should be replaced by a GTA-wide body, these questions should be the focus of any legislation that restructures the relations between municipalities. Such questions may be difficult to answer. It may take a great deal of time and consultations. However, to do it right, the time must be taken. Eliminating local councils is not the appropriate answer to these questions.

The second point I'd like to make about Bill 103, the megacity bill is that it defies, in spirit, democracy. Even if permissible by law, this bill (a) attacks democratically elected councils, the representatives of the people; (b) appoints individuals into positions of power over the city, individuals who are not elected and who are answerable neither to the citizens nor to the courts; and (c) is in contempt of the legislative process. I will address each of these issues in turn.

First, the megacity bill attacks the citizens' democratically elected representatives. Section 27 dissolves the elected councils of the municipalities of Metropolitan

Toronto. The citizens who elected them have no say. Commonsense notions of democracy are that it is the citizens who elect their representatives in and elect them out, not the provincial government. The province may have the legal authority to destroy the councils of Ontario at will, but commonsense notions of democracy deny it the moral authority.

Second, the megacity bill puts unelected individuals who are not accountable to the citizens in charge of them and their cities. Section 9 places trustees in control of duly elected councils and section 11 empowers them with final approval of all budget items. Section 16 establishes a transition team to determine the structure of the new city. Sections 16(5) and (6) grant the transition team certain powers over the duly elected councils, such as access to information and the imposition of deadlines for compliance. Where is the accountability? These individuals are not elected. They are not answerable to citizens. Instead, they are answerable to the provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Sections 12, 15, 18 and 21 place the trustees, the transition team and any of their decisions outside the jurisdiction of the courts. I ask again, where is the accountability?

Section 24 gives the provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs sweeping and loosely defined powers that are outside of local democratic processes and accountability, including the unchecked ability to limit any activity of the duly elected councils or boards in Metropolitan Toronto, to prescribe the duties of the trustees and transition team and to define at will any of his powers not already defined. This is not how democracy is meant to work.

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Finally, in addition to demonstrating contempt for democratic processes, I firmly believe that this bill demonstrates a telling contempt of the legislative process. Section 10 establishes the powers of the trustees over the financial affairs of the municipal governments effective December 17, 1996, the date of the bill's introduction and not the date of its passage. I ask this committee, what if this bill does not pass? By what authority would these individuals have control of citizens' finances? None. They would have no authority. Section 10 assumes the passage of the bill. First reading, second reading, third reading, this very committee are trivialized by this bill. The legislative process becomes a formality, not a means of governing. We are left with rule by decree.

In summary, this bill will increase expenses and worsen services for the citizens of Metropolitan Toronto because it targets and destroys the wrong levels of governance. In addition, it undermines and even blatantly dismisses the democratic processes available to these same citizens. For both reasons, I implore that this committee not permit the further passage of this bill. Thank you.

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South):** David, I want to thank you for your presentation. I've got three questions and I'll try to go through them fairly quickly. In the last election it was fairly clear, by the words spoken by the then leader of the third party, Mike Harris, that he favoured local government versus where we're going now. Did you think in the last election, given those words

by Mike Harris and others, that the Tories were going to go ahead with such a proposal as they are putting forward today?

**Mr Collister:** No, I didn't. I was quite surprised.

**Mr Bisson:** Following from that then, I guess the next question: Do you think, given that in the last election they didn't run on this, there was no indication on the part of the Tories that they were going to move to megacity, that they have a mandate during this term to do what they're doing now?

**Mr Collister:** I don't believe any government has a mandate. If they are elected in with a number of different promises, some of which people approve, some of which they don't, each bill that's introduced into the government has to be fully debated and fully argued and have full input from the citizens. I don't think mandates are a proper thing for a government to have.

**Mr Bisson:** But specifically on something like this, as it's a fairly large departure from tradition here in Ontario — Toronto is being changed in a big way — if they didn't run on this in the last election, do you think they've got the mandate in between to be able to do it?

**Mr Collister:** No, I don't think they do.

**Mr Bisson:** Now we've got a referendum going on. The quick question is, there's a referendum happening and if at the end of that referendum people in the Metropolitan area say no by more than 50%, do you think the government should go forward? Do they have a mandate to go forward or should they stop?

**Mr Collister:** They definitely wouldn't have the mandate to go forward and I believe they should stop.

**Mr Bisson:** What happens if they say: "We're going to go forward. We're not going to listen to the people of the Metropolitan cities of Toronto"?

**Mr Collister:** Then I will have to do my best to make sure that this legislation does not go through.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for presenting to us tonight.

### CHRIS HOOK

**The Vice-Chair:** Chris Hook? Good evening and welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation, and if there is time within that 10 minutes for questions, they'll come from the government caucus.

**Mr Chris Hook:** Wonderful. Thank you very much.

**Mr Bisson:** Lucky you.

**Mr Hook:** Looking forward to it.

My name is Chris Hook. I'm a student at McMaster University. I live in Richmond Hill, and I'm here to speak in favour of Bill 103. Indeed, I was going to start with something a little bit different, but to begin with I'd like to comment on some comments that the gentleman who spoke before me made.

I think Mr Collister was saying that somehow Bill 103 is going to dismantle democracy in Toronto. I must say that is, in my opinion, a spectacularly naïve point of view which I don't think is believed or reflected in the opinions of any students I know personally. I think exactly the opposite. I think Bill 103 is very much a testament to democracy and to improving it, and I'm just going to outline why.

The megacity proposal is, as I guess Yogi Berra would say, déjà vu all over again. What we're seeing is the municipalities, the cities of Metropolitan Toronto amalgamated, just as when, for example, the city of North York came together from the borough of North York, we saw a group of smaller cities come together, cities such as — obviously not in North York, but cities like Parkdale and Leaside, small villages, which were amalgamated into a larger municipal body. In that process smaller town councils or administrative local governments were amalgamated into a larger one, but what's happening here is that that power is being returned to the villages through neighbourhood councils.

We're seeing community councils to replace the existing city governments. Neighbourhood councils are going to be going back and allowing citizens in small municipalities, smaller areas of the cities, to again have a voice. This is a wonderful sort of municipal government because it doesn't cost the taxpayer anything and it allows more taxpayers or representatives from the villages to come in and represent their own point of view. That's very important. We need to make politics more user-friendly. We need to allow more people to come back and play a role in the political process. We need to return the do-it-yourself aspect to politics. Neighbourhood councils and community councils are going to do that.

The next issue I'd like to bring up is the whole issue of jobs. I think the number one issue for students nowadays is jobs rather than education. You can obtain an education with the great big credit card called OSAP, but when it comes to going out and getting a job, jobs for young people today are scarce. I think this streamlining of municipal government is going to accomplish a number of different things.

First of all, you're going to see less red tape. People will know more instinctively where to go to access government, to deal with zoning changes and to get permission for building adjustments and so on and so forth. I think it's going to allow freer competition, so if I've got a restaurant across the street from another restaurant and smoking is allowed in his facility and not in my own, this will give me a chance to compete fairly without having to have my customers go across the street because they want to smoke.

Third, I think this is going to put a lot of money back into the economy. We're dealing with somewhere in the neighbourhood over \$1 billion over the next four years and \$300 million the year after that. That's money that's going to go back into the economy and spur jobs.

The next thing I'd like to talk about are international opportunities. International opportunities, opportunities that we've missed out on in the past, such as Expos and Olympic events, are great big jobfests. I was at the Atlanta Olympic Games and I spoke to a student who was standing on the street selling flags. He did over \$10,000 worth of business during the Olympics. If we brought festivities like this to Toronto, although that may be a bit of an extreme example, students could then go and get jobs and pay for their tuition, whereas summer jobs right now are to some degree scarce. This is a matter of putting money back into the economy.

Finally, we have to look at the different sorts of plans that are available, that have been put forward. The Harris government has downsized itself first. They've done first by example and then they've set forth to go and downsize other levels of government. The mayors' plan, curiously enough, keeps all six mayors and the Metro plan still keeps the Metro level of government. I think you're looking at rather self-serving bodies putting forth plans to counter this plan that I think have no legitimacy whatsoever.

I'd just like to conclude by saying that we live in the best city in the world but we can't rest on our laurels. We have to continue to make it better for future generations. Thank you.

**Mr Terence Young:** Thank you, Mr Hook. I appreciated your presentation. I'd like to ask you about how you would view a democratic vote or a plebiscite that operated in this fashion: One group controls the question on the ballot and the same group controls actually who gets a ballot. That ballot could go only to property owners, like in ancient Greece, not to everyone; it could be distributed in a newspaper that could easily be thrown out; or perhaps three ballots could go to each house regardless of how many adult citizens live there. You could have cats or dogs voting, frankly. There's no enumeration done. The system is totally open to fraud. You could have people voting twice, three times, four times, five times or more. The same group takes money from everyone and funds the campaign of their side only. They supply free workers, who are paid for by everyone, to help their side. What kind of democratic vote is that?

**Mr Hook:** I think you're absolutely right, that's not a democratic vote. You also have to bear in mind, just to add to your point, that people like Mel Lastman are trying to save their jobs. They have access to very large budgets and they're willing to spend it all to save that, simply because they won't exist if they don't. They're in it to save themselves. They're not in it to save the taxpayer anything. They're in it to save themselves and they will spend, spend, spend taxpayers' money.

1930

**Mr Terence Young:** Mr Hook, isn't that the kind of vote that's held in a totalitarian country?

**Mr Hook:** I believe it is.

*Laughter.*

**The Vice-Chair:** Order, please.

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Hook, if you had been here for the last two weeks, the general theme has been that Bill 103, the whole idea of amalgamation, is going to destroy just about everything when and if this bill gets passed as of, say, midnight March 31. Lake Ontario is going to swallow up the city of Toronto. I haven't quite heard that yet but I'm sure we will. The whole new unified city idea has suggested that probably everything is responsible for the destruction of the environment, toxic real estate, global — I haven't heard the global warming argument yet but I'm sure that one will be presented somehow or other.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Hook:** Excuse me for a moment. Could the Chair ask the members of the room to keep their comments

quiet, please, because I'm having some trouble hearing Mr Hastings.

**The Vice-Chair:** Yes. I did ask, and I would ask all of you to make sure we have that respect here in the room.

**Mr Hastings:** My point is this, Mr Hook: Ever since the city of Toronto was joined with the other municipalities in the Metro federation since 1953, all the mayors of the city of Toronto, with the exception of the existing mayor and possibly Mr Sewell, have promoted in one way or another amalgamation. In fact the "mayor of all the people," Nate Phillips back in the late 1950s and early 1960s, actually proposed at city council that they be the amalgamationist movement — right up to Phil Givens as mayor.

Can you explain to me and the members of this committee how that past history — it is history and it can be checked out on the record — has been completely abandoned for the existing city of Toronto position not only officially but by a lot of the folks who are coming in here, which is the reverse, an anti-amalgamationist position?

**Mr Hook:** I'm having some trouble understanding that point of view, not yours but the point of view I think you're talking about, this abandonment. I think the steps taken by the Mike Harris government to solve and rectify some of the problems of the past are going to make Toronto and the greater Toronto area a lot more prosperous in the future.

**Mr Hastings:** Why do you think —

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Hastings and Mr Hook. Our time is up.

RACHEL SINGER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Rachel Singer. Good evening, Ms Singer.

**Ms Rachel Singer:** Good evening. My name is Rachel Singer and I'm a first-year student at York University. I have come before you tonight to speak from the heart about my concerns over Bill 103 and the downloading of social services on to the cities.

Presently I am already in debt at the ripe old age of 19. However, this is the case for many university students who cannot afford to attend university without financial assistance.

The effects of Bill 103 and the downloading of social services will be drastic and affect every individual and family in Metropolitan Toronto. Property taxes will go up. I'm not a business or math major. However, I can figure out that increased taxes will destroy our cities in the following ways: Businesses and homeowners who will not be able to afford the increased taxes will move to somewhere cheaper. This will result in an empty downtown core. Presently I feel relatively safe to walk home at night. This is due to a lively downtown area and a great transportation system. However, with a dead downtown as a result of high taxes, this will change.

Increased property taxes will also mean that unemployment and homelessness will increase as government employees are laid off. Businesses will go bankrupt and other publicly funded services will be forced to lay off staff to save money.

What does this mean? Apart from the quality of life, education, health care and transportation services decreasing, there are other factors to consider when an increase in unemployment occurs.

First of all, crime will most likely rise as it will be harder and harder to make a living legally.

It is also a known fact that wife battering increases in hard economic times. The Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women reported in their film *Without Fear* that 20% of women admitted to hospital through the emergency department are victims of family violence; 62% of all reported assaults are from women experiencing violence within their homes.

Therefore it is a known trend that in tough economic times there is an increase in wife battering. The effects of this will be that more women will be assaulted and killed as a direct result of the downloading of services and Bill 103. This will mean that police and health care responses to family violence will also increase. Clearly this will end up costing Ontario more money and lives for a problem that can be prevented.

Furthermore, the very social services that help address violence against women through education and shelters have had their funding drastically reduced. This means that Metro is currently unprepared to deal with these increased social problems.

Unemployment due to Bill 103 and the downloading of services will also mean that welfare rates and homelessness will increase. It is important to remember that welfare users are not a statistic but real individuals and children who become sucked into the cycle of poverty.

However, it is not only the reduction of the quality of life, education, health care and an increase in taxes and unemployment that make me deeply concerned about Bill 103 and its impact on the city in which I was born and have lived all my life. I'm also angry at the Ontario government's attempt to restrict my democratic representation.

Each city has its own special needs. Toronto is no exception. It is inconceivable to me how appointed trustees will be able to control my life and the people who have been elected to represent the public. It is unrealistic to think that a trustee situated in, for example, Mississauga would understand the need and importance of bike paths in downtown Toronto.

I was always taught in high school that in theory no one is above the law. The three trustees the government wishes to appoint contradict this rule in that they are not accountable to anyone. I do not see any difference between appointing trustees and thus taking away my civic rights and a dictatorship.

When looking at history, the restriction of civic rights has commonly been the first step to a totalitarian government or dictatorship, yet we look at these historical tragedies and say, "Never again."

I am not a special interest group. I will not allow my democratic rights to be taken away from me. When a government is elected into power, they are to represent all citizens.

Just because I don't agree with this government's proposed megacity plan doesn't mean I can be labelled and ignored. All governments have a substantial amount

of power. However, it is the power of democracy that insists that before any decision is made, permission must be granted by the people.

The people may be asked directly or through representatives they have elected. They must be asked, listened to and respected. Without consent, it's assault. I have not given my consent.

**Mr Sergio:** I thank you very much, Miss Singer, for coming down to make a presentation to our committee here. I'll try and have a couple of questions since we have four minutes.

Amalgamation has been used as amalgamation, megacity, disentanglement and what have you. Some of the previous speakers have said this afternoon that we don't want to talk about tax reform, downloading, we are here to talk solely about amalgamation of the six municipalities. Do you really believe even as a student, perhaps as some sit-ins are taking place as we speak now, that we can take megacity on its own without taking into consideration the effect of the downloading on to local municipalities?

1940

**Ms Singer:** I don't think anything in politics happens in a coincidental manner. I think the fact that all this has occurred at the same time means there is a great connection. It just seems to me the drastic effects that downloading will have will make this city more unprepared to deal with amalgamation. They're both huge disruptions to city life.

**Mr Sergio:** I have a couple of other questions, and we'll and try and indulge in asking as many questions as possible in the time we have.

You have touched on the democratic system and the process as well. We have had very recently the Crombie report, which went through a matter of months of serious study by Mr Crombie and the others on the panel. We had the Golden report. I believe we had a number of reports in the last number of years. All of them received considerable attention by the public, the politicians and those who were assigned to conduct those reports.

What we have in front of us now no one expected to come as a flash from the government — no one. It has not received one word from anyone. We received the introduction of the bill in the House unexpectedly. Do you think this is democratic? Do you think the government should have said, "Leave alone what has been done up to now, including the Crombie report; we want to propose something else and we want to send it for public hearings at large"? We had to fight to get you here tonight, to have this public hearing.

If what the government has been proposing is so good, you'd think they would have —

**Mr Terence Young:** That's not true.

**Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre):** That's not true, you know that.

**Mr Terence Young:** This whole session of Parliament was for this purpose.

**Ms Singer:** Can I listen to the end of the question, please?

**The Vice-Chair:** Order.

**Mr Sergio:** If it were true that this proposal was that good, don't you think the government would have

embarked on a series of public hearings throughout Metro instead of confining them strictly to Queen's Park here?

**Ms Singer:** I think if this bill is so good it would have been talked about in the election, when it happened. I think the government would have said they were in favour of it when in fact they said they weren't. I don't think it's the democratic process. The fact that the government has limited the amount of debate that is discussed on this issue, the fact that the number of hours of hearings have been limited and the fact that they have refused to give a referendum — I don't think any of that is democracy.

**Mr Sergio:** That was my next question.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. The time has elapsed.

### PAUL YOUNG

**The Vice-Chair:** Is Paul Young here? Good evening, Mr Young.

**Mr Paul Young:** Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak here tonight. I would like to make several points regarding Bill 103.

Throughout the past few months I have experienced a range of emotions in response to the work of this government. The first was confusion. I am confused by this bill. I have listened to your points in favour of amalgamation and I'm straining to understand the merits. I had hoped that when the studies were complete, the minister would weigh the evidence and make a decision that would benefit the cities in question.

This, however, was not the case. The studies were completed in an extremely short time and they reported that there may be potential savings. This is an extremely weak conclusion, especially when one considers the fact that KPMG, the consultant, was hired by this government, a government that is obviously desperate for evidence that amalgamation will save money. There is still no evidence of savings, this government's sole rationale for amalgamation. In fact, evidence seems to point in the opposite direction.

I asked myself, how then can the notion of amalgamation be pursued any further? Opponents began citing countless examples of amalgamation in other countries, cities or provinces where municipal costs went up. I understand this is the case in Halifax, where municipal services have become chaotic and unmanageable since they amalgamated a year ago. So we have no evidence of the benefits of amalgamation, nor do we have any success stories. To the contrary, there seem to be limitless examples of how amalgamation costs more and is less efficient.

My confusion grows as I struggle to understand yet another aspect of Bill 103: the downloading of financial responsibilities to the municipalities. We were assured that this transfer would be revenue-neutral, yet yesterday the front page of the *Globe and Mail* reported that the hastily prepared reports have actually underestimated costs to municipalities as a result of the downloading. According to the article, this bill will not be revenue-neutral, as this government reports, and the provincial costs are estimated at \$866 million.

My confusion changes to fear. I fear the power that this government has to transform this city into a US-style, gutted urban core overnight. We are an award-winning city, according to *Fortune* magazine, yet this government is moving at an alarming pace to change the city. What does it mean to be an award-winning city? To me, it's about quality of life for all people, regardless of income, race, religion or gender. I work in the field of urban planning, where Toronto is considered a model city. All over North America people are striving to build cities like this. Recognizing that urban sprawl is forcing municipalities into economic and environmental disaster, planners are looking to models that seem to be working, models like Toronto.

The streets are relatively safe to walk on. Our neighbourhoods promote interaction, people meeting face to face, getting to know and understand different backgrounds and perspectives, and looking out for one another. Neighbourhoods built in the 1950s do not allow for this kind of interaction, where most of one's life, outside that of the home and the workplace, unfolds in the car.

It would be a grave error to believe that the success of Toronto hinges solely on its unique turn-of-the-century urban form: the streets, transit, housing mixes etc. My fear is that this government does not understand what makes this city different from those in the United States. US cities have characteristic patterns. I would urge the minister to investigate how they work. On that note, I spoke recently with a planner in the city of Baltimore. She lives in the city and enjoys the quality of life that it offers: restaurants, entertainment, proximity to work, markets, walking etc. However, she is moving to the suburbs. Why? She explained that she is having a child. She explained the other side of urban living in many US cities. These are cities that contain large populations living in intense poverty, essentially Third World conditions.

I hope the minister is familiar with the notion of the hole in the doughnut. I will explain this, but again I would urge the minister to tour some of these cities and be sure to visit all the neighbourhoods. The downtowns are drastically underserviced, while the surrounding municipalities enjoy a high quality of health care, education, policing, parks, housing — the list goes on. These conditions are a direct result of underrepresentation in the city: the hole in the doughnut.

The suburban areas have more political clout than the inner city, so services that the city depends on become less of a priority. Affordable housing, school programs, recreation and parks, transit — why would someone in the suburbs care about transit when their priority is commuting by car? Where do the tax dollars go? The costs of servicing and maintaining hard services, like roads and sewers, in the suburbs is substantially higher, simply because everything is more spread out. In the urban core, where it is well known that a higher level of soft services are required, we will be forced to decide between higher taxes or a reduction in already scarce services.

I believe this is the direction that Bill 103 points to for the cities in Metro. With fewer politicians to represent the

current city of Toronto, the urban core will become a dumping ground for municipal waste, sewage and noxious industries, while services for the residents become overburdened.

**1950**

I am reminded of a cartoon depicting a number of doors to municipal services. All but one had locks and signs barring entry. The library, the recreation centre, the shelters and the public ice rink were closed. The only door that remained open was the prison. I find it hard to believe that any government would really want this to take place. Again, I would urge the minister to spend some time in several US cities. I think Mr Leach will agree that what we have now is far more desirable.

I was reluctant to address the points that follow for fear that I might lose my audience. I thought if I kept my comments upbeat and constructive there would be a better chance that they might be taken to heart by our elected representatives. I have never openly criticized a government in this manner but I feel compelled at this time to state my feelings.

I am suspicious. This government has not earned my trust. We were told that we can have a referendum on a casino but not on amalgamation. Now that we are having a referendum, we are told that it won't be acknowledged. What is this government afraid of? A legitimate form of public participation is under way. People are struggling to understand the impact of this legislation. What reason could a government elected to represent the people have against the voice of the people?

You have dismissed criticism in the past as the voice of special interest groups. The referendum has no affiliation; it is people just like me who feel enough urgency to give up hours, days of their time to try and get their voice heard. They include wealthy, poor, old, young, long-time Torontonians and newcomers alike, even people who voted for this government. To date, I have not heard any support for this bill, prior to the previous speaker. I believe you should carefully think about what you will do if there is a majority against this bill in the referendum.

My suspicion has turned to anger. I am tired of trying to keep up with the barrage of changes hidden within this legislation and I now believe that this is a tactic to wear down the people who take it upon themselves to understand and respond to new policy. This government is prohibiting the people of Ontario from participating in decisions that will result in unprecedented and irreversible changes in our communities.

Clearly we are not expected to respond to all this at once, and in the ensuing confusion I believe this government is pushing through some very undemocratic measures. We still have no rationale for this bill. Instead taxpayers are paying for a media blitz complete with 30 seconds of shallow reassurances that everything is all right. Other PR campaigns resulted in this government being found in contempt, the first time ever in Ontario. In my mind this is a propaganda campaign, and I find it insulting.

I believe this government is setting new precedents in undemocratic practices. This government has installed

trustees prior to the legislation being passed. The trustees are not elected, yet they will control the finances of our cities. This is unacceptable and, in my opinion, a gross misuse of powers. I suspect that this government is looking for dollars to cover a promised tax break. I cannot support a bill that puts more money into the hands of the upper-income brackets at the expense of our social support services, on top of the devastating change it will bring to our city.

Ironically, I grow more and more hopeful as this charade unfolds. The emperor has no clothes. As we get closer to the March 3 date, I sense an awakening in my workplace, among my friends and family and in my neighbourhood. I fail to see the crisis that makes this bill necessary. I would urge you —

**The Vice-Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Young, you have exceeded the time available.

**Mr Paul Young:** Okay, just one sentence: I would urge you to acknowledge the overwhelming public opposition to this bill. There has been a lot of work already done on municipal restructuring. Why not continue and build on what has been done? Work with us, not on us.

As you know, Toronto is not alone in its concerns. I hear that Hamilton, with a 50% voter turnout, voted overwhelmingly against amalgamation. I look forward to your response to the referendum here in Toronto.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Young.

**Mr Paul Young:** Thanks for listening.

### LILA LAAKSO

**The Vice-Chair:** Lila Laakso. Good evening, Ms Laakso, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Lila Laakso:** Madam Chairman and members of the committee, Toronto is our family's home. For 35 years we have lived and worked in our city, which has helped to educate and inspire us. Multicultural Toronto is rich and diverse in libraries, universities, lectures, conferences, festivals, theatre, music, symphony, ballet, concerts, films, museums, galleries and many other things such as the waterfront, sport facilities, playgrounds, parks, rinks, swimming pools, golf courses. Everyone does not use these possibilities: Some cannot afford them, some do not have the time, some are not aware of them. My dream has always been that every Torontonian should be able to use this city to the ultimate and that it should be available to all people.

We were therefore deeply disturbed and hurt when Minister Leach, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, announced December 17 last that the seven municipal governments of Toronto would be replaced by one municipality, the city of Toronto.

Why would the Conservative government trash Toronto, which had just been named by US Fortune magazine in October as the best international city in the world to live and work, ahead of runners-up London, Paris, Singapore and Hong Kong? Ahead also of New York and Chicago. Minister Leach, in justification of Bill 103, bragged that a new, unified, strong city of Toronto will have more international clout. How can you be higher than first?

It has been found around the world that responsibility and accountability is best ensured in cities by an emphasis on the local level of governance. We have heard the many panels and experts: professors, city planners, architects, world experts on cities. All reject the one-tier megacity plan, pointing out that it creates destroyed shells of large cities. Minister Leach's plan of amalgamation will eliminate the local government tier. This stand is opposite to his position when he was a member of the Trimmer panel, just before the 1995 elections, when he called for key services to be delivered by strengthened local governments.

The logic of the call by the Golden commission of January 1996 to continue two-tiered municipal government extending or stretching beyond Toronto on a Metro-type plan to include the whole GTA is superior to Minister Leach's imposed megacity. To amalgamate only six of the some 30 GTA municipalities is no answer. The problems of growth and equity will remain. A democratic meeting, before legislation, with all concerned councils and citizens could have hammered out a better solution through consultation and consensus than the Conservative-decreed megacity.

Not only was Minister Leach's announcement unbelievable — why replace what is not broken? — but the draconian methods he utilized to initiate the megacity are questionable and probably illegal. The Conservatives have no mandate for a new municipal structure since Metro restructuring had not been discussed before the last election when 72% of possible voters did not vote Conservative. With no warning or, more important, no previous discussion with the citizenry, the megacity is being forced undemocratically upon us.

No credible impact studies have been revealed to show the superiority of the megacity format. Former Conservative Scarborough Mayor Joyce Trimmer called the legislation appalling and dishonest, while accusing the government of playing games that threaten to leave Metro neighbourhoods whipped to death. She continues: "I'm very concerned...the government is moving away from the grass roots. It is the grass roots who keep politicians in line. Maybe that's the idea behind it, because when you make a city so huge, the politicians can't be controlled."

#### 2000

Not only is the megacity less democratic, but the Conservatives undemocratically placed the mandated municipalities of Toronto, Scarborough, Etobicoke, East York, North York, York and Metro under trusteeship. There was no revelation of fraud, corruption, financial mismanagement or bankruptcy, for which trusteeship is available in legislation. Contrary to this, the municipalities are financially strong, have balanced budgets and have reserves which together amount to more than a billion dollars. Is this what the Conservatives are eyeing, since they have frozen the reserves under trustee rule? What could be more undemocratic than to put elected governments under trusteeship a year before their mandate is up? In addition, Minister Leach used an illegal precedent of making his bill retroactive to December 17, 1996, a date several months before the bill has even passed the House.

A perusing of Bill 103 shows that it is supposedly about the incorporating of a new city of Toronto. But of its 23 pages, less than 20% of the total discuss the new city. The rest is taken up by the board of trustees, the transition team, and ministerial regulation and powers. The new city apparently is not under discussion. It is its installation that is.

The board of trustees and the transition team are appointed by the government. Their duties are to monitor for compliance to the bill, assist in preparing 1997 operating and capital budgets, and set up hiring and promotion guidelines. The legally elected council is to co-operate, assist and comply with trustee wishes and requests, allow examination of records and documents and follow the deadlines set by the trustees. Many restrictions on the old council are enumerated: Board-approved budgets must not be altered; the council must not buy or sell beyond \$50,000; reserve funds must not be touched. Further, the bill spells out, "No proceeding for damages shall be commenced against the board of trustees...for an act done in good faith in the execution...of their duty under this act...or for any alleged neglect or default in the execution...of that duty."

The transition team duties include: producing spending and taxing limits for any year for the new council; establishing the organizational structure for the new city; hiring department heads and other employees. The bill spells out, "The new city is bound by the employment contracts" made by the transition team and "the decisions of the transition team are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court." Is this democracy?

**The Vice-Chair:** Excuse me, Ms Laakso, we're nearly at the end of your time.

**Ms Laakso:** All right, I'll speed it up.

I have listed a small part only of the work and powers of the board of trustees and transition team spelled out in Bill 103. We can see how local democracy has been trampled upon. The provincial government, through its agents and its dictatorial powers, is taking over our municipal government.

I am frightened, for local democracy in Toronto has been suspended. Elected officials have been superseded by provincially appointed officials who cannot be held to account. Citizens were given no opportunity to participate in public debate. The Minister of Municipal Affairs swears he will not be swayed in his resolve. Toronto is under seige. Withdraw Bill 103.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Laakso.

**Ms Laakso:** I want to conclude with John Ralston Saul's quote from —

**The Vice-Chair:** I have let you go well beyond the time. I'm sorry.

**Ms Laakso:** Perhaps the rest of you can read John Ralston Saul's quote from page 168 in *The Unconscious Civilization*. It's quite appropriate to what is happening here.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

GREG DINSMORE

**The Vice-Chair:** I call on Greg Dinsmore. Good evening, Mr Dinsmore, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Greg Dinsmore:** My name is Greg Dinsmore. I'm a university student currently doing graduate studies at York University. I have lived in Toronto pretty much all my life, and I have come here to make an argument against the proposed Bill 103 to amalgamate the six municipalities of the greater Toronto area. I'm asking that the government scrap it if a majority of the population or a majority of the municipalities vote against it in the upcoming referendum.

The primary argument given by the government in favour of amalgamation is that it will make administration of the city more efficient and therefore will save taxpayers money which can be used to cut their taxes. It is this idea of efficiency that I will be discussing tonight.

I would like to begin my argument by stating the two assumptions that underlie it. First, I assume the intention behind Bill 103 is to improve the situation of the GTA, to make it more efficient, as the government claims. If this is not the case, then it makes no sense to argue that they are wrong, which is what I am about to do.

Second, I assume the majority of the population of the major municipalities — North York, Toronto — is against amalgamation. Not only does this seem to be the case, according to recent polls, but I also accept that if these two municipalities endorse amalgamation the government probably has a mandate to go ahead.

On to the question of efficiency: There are other measures of efficiency besides mere savings in dollars. In a city the size of the GTA, for government to be efficient it must be flexible. The needs of the downtown core are quite obviously different from those of the suburbs, as others have mentioned. In order to be efficient, the municipal government must be able to provide the required services to the appropriate areas. It seems clear to me that if amalgamation is put forth, hidden costs will arise as the government tries to figure out how to deliver different services to different areas. Therefore, it seems that in order to efficiently amalgamate services in Toronto, the process would have to be done from the bottom up rather than from the top down. That way, those services that are the same for all can be shared and those that are specific to certain municipalities can be locally controlled. This seems quite possible within the current setup. It goes against all common sense to say that it is efficient to centralize all services in a city the size of Toronto. If this were the case, every large city in North America would be structured in this way.

Another reason for the necessity of flexible and therefore local government is the rapidly changing nature of the city. As we speak, Toronto is getting bigger and is welcoming more and more cultural communities. Also, as communication technologies advance and as the world becomes more and more integrated, changes in the economy occur more rapidly. In order to respond to the demands of both these factors, government must have the ability to adjust quickly, to target policies to different areas of the city. As we all know, the larger the government becomes, the more difficulty it has in responding quickly to new challenges, the more it becomes bogged down by bureaucratic inertia. In that sense, maintaining local governments seems to be essential if Toronto is to

remain competitive in a global economy and if it is to continue to operate as a successful cosmopolitan city.

However, what seems to be the most important point regarding the possible efficiency of an amalgamated GTA is that Toronto cannot be made efficient in spite of itself. If Bill 103 is put forth despite a decisive rejection in the referendum, the backlash created will more than eliminate any savings that might, however doubtfully, otherwise be made. If the results of the referendum are ignored, I do not believe people will simply accept the government's decision. The reforms proposed by the provincial government directly affect every single member of the GTA. It affects their homes, their communities, their families, their children. They will not just let it slide. There will be protests. There will be Days of Action. There will be court challenges and there will be a general reluctance to comply with the megacity government. This will not enhance the efficient functioning of a municipal government. A government cannot be efficient if it is not legitimate in the eyes of those it represents.

#### 2010

This brings me back to my initial assumption that the intention behind Bill 103 is the improvement of the government of the GTA. If I am wrong, if this is not the case — that is to say, if the measures are designed to bring about another objective, such as the implementation of workfare or the use of Toronto's property tax revenues to allow the provincial government to finance its promised tax cut — the new government cannot be considered legitimate by the residents of the GTA. I would see no reason for them to recognize its authority. Thank you.

**Mr Bisson:** I go back to the very beginning. In the last election — I asked this question previously, but I think it's topical to what you've presented here — the current government did not run on a mandate to move towards what we're doing with Bill 103, making a megacity. Do you think the government has any authority to do this at this point, given that it did not run on this? This was not part of the Common Sense Revolution. They indicated at every opportunity that they wanted to do exactly the opposite: strengthen local government.

**Mr Dinsmore:** I don't really believe they have a mandate to do so. However, if the municipalities are going to put forth referenda to speak out against it, it seems to me that the flip side of that — if you put forth referenda and ask the government to accept the result if they say no, the implicit argument in that is that you have to accept their decision if they say yes. My assumption is they will not, but if the government has a mandate, it is required to follow a referendum simply because it was not part of their Common Sense Revolution.

**Mr Bisson:** In this case, the mayor of the city of Toronto and other mayors offered to sit down with the provincial government to come up with an acceptable question, a question everybody would be comfortable with. The government said, "No, we don't want any part of a referendum," which indicates it may be worried about the outcome. In the end, my sense is that the referendum will be won by the no side, the people who are against the megacity. Where does that leave the government afterwards vis-à-vis this bill?

**Mr Dinsmore:** It seems quite clear that it would not be legitimate. That was the point of my presentation. It is not legitimate in that it was not part of the mandate they were elected on and it has been rejected by those it affects. Toronto may be part of the province, but that does not mean that those who live in Kingston, Sudbury and North Bay should necessarily be deciding how this city is run.

**Mr Bisson:** Let me move to a different area. This Tory government prides itself on trying to do away with big government, trying to make all kinds of efficiencies so government is smaller and closer to the people, that this would be a much better thing. The government is creating a huge bureaucracy in the new city that will be created.

Does that leave the government in a bit of an awkward spot? They're out there trying to say, "We're going to create more efficient government. We're going to bring it closer to the people," but what they're doing here is creating a huge bureaucracy called the city of Toronto at the end of all this.

**Mr Dinsmore:** That's the substance of the argument. The entire discourse from the Conservative Party, the Reform Party, that general discourse has traditionally been that government is too big, that it must be pared down, that large bureaucracies don't respond to the people. This in substance seems to be going against that, although there may be ulterior motives or other reasons to go about doing it. It does not seem efficient in order to improve the lot of the city of Toronto.

**Mr Bisson:** Toronto, time and time again, is chosen as the number one city in the world, the place of envy, the place everybody looks to when it comes to planning for a city. Partly a statement and partly a question: Your comment at the end maybe wraps it up. There's an old adage in the private sector that it takes money to make money. If you want to have a successful business, you have to invest, you have to make sure you have a good basis on which to run your business, which means to say, it costs money. You need to make sure you've got the infrastructure and the expertise in place in your business to go out and take advantage of every opportunity to be number one. Toronto, it seems to me, has proven itself. It's number one.

If Toronto is number one and we've done it well to this point, what is in these people's minds to try to return us to something that clearly doesn't work when you compare it to what's happened in other cities and examples of where they've done amalgamation in bigger metropolitan centres than Toronto?

**Mr Dinsmore:** At some level that's exactly what I'm trying to say. I don't really have anything I can add to that. That is the substance of what I'm trying to say here today.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Dinsmore, for appearing here this evening.

#### NORAIR YERETSIAN

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Norair Yeretsian. Welcome. We appreciate your coming.

**Mr Norair Yeretsian:** Good evening. My name is Norair Yeretsian. I have lived in Toronto since the early

1960s. I am currently the immediate past president of the Scarborough Chamber of Commerce. I'm also a member of the board of directors of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. I have served as a chairman of the economic development committee of the Scarborough Chamber of Commerce for three years. However, I am here tonight representing only myself and my humble opinion as a citizen and ratepayer in the greater Toronto area.

As a small businessman, a realtor and an aspiring builder-developer in the greater Toronto area, I am very much aware of the enormous challenges and opportunities we face on a daily basis. Adding to this, we have the multitude of diverse rules, regulations and procedures, the differing bylaws and directions impacting the hopes of future growth and prosperity throughout the greater Toronto area.

We have had up to recently aggressive campaigns for jobs and economic development, one small city against another, at the cost of the other, and all at the taxpayers' expense. We are currently overtaxed and overgoverned in the greater Toronto area. Living in the ever-competitive global environment, we can ill afford either luxury. Our civic leaders are quick to get on a plane and go halfway around the world looking for economic development opportunities, yet fail to notice the abundant talent and local opportunities, the fat and waste in the system until they're pressured from above. We market to the world to locate their businesses here, but here again we were pressured into marketing to the world and into playing catch-up as we're trying to do recently.

On this basis we are both inefficient and ineffective. Our business people succeed in spite of their location in the greater Toronto area, not because of it, within a North American and global perspective. Our property taxes are unnecessarily high, in part attributed to the inefficient nature and current setup of local governance. An example we've forgotten, I guess, because of the latest quote about being tops in Fortune magazine, is that we're also tops in taxes in North America. Toronto tops Vancouver, New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Baltimore, Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Cincinnati, Atlanta, San Diego and Seattle — the Financial Post. We are tops.

#### 2020

I'd also like to share with you the results of a survey recently conducted by the Scarborough Chamber of Commerce among its membership, 63% responding yes to megacity. Summarizing the results: 63% of the respondents indicated that they want the six local governments replaced with one; 51% believe they have enough understanding of the facts to make a choice at this time; 86% believe they are presently overgoverned; 77% feel that the supermayor should be elected by the ratepayers; 65% believe amalgamation of the six local governments will not have a negative impact on the quality of life in their community; 65% believe they will not lose a sense of community if a megacity is established; 56% believe they will have adequate representation on a single council; 42% don't believe their taxes will decrease as a result of the merger; and 75% don't believe the new supermayor should be elected by members of the new council.

I was pleasantly and greatly surprised when, given only one month, our six civic leaders were able to come up with savings of over \$200 million in a single year of current realty taxes collected from the ratepayers of the greater Toronto area. My question as a ratepayer is, where have they been all these years, and where have all our potential savings gone over all those years? Our realty taxes are unnecessarily high, and where is the democracy in that? As homeowners, we have been held hostage and have been required to pay and pay for many small and large inefficiencies and waste. I would like to thank the Mike Harris government and Minister Al Leach for encouraging our civic leaders to search for, find and cut out the fat and waste in the current system which has impeded and slowed economic development, job creation and prosperity in the greater Toronto area over these many years.

I am confident that with five fewer city halls, with their corresponding administrations and overhead expenses, and the establishment of one civic leadership for this one great city of Toronto, there shall be even more reduction of waste, duplication, historical political positioning and infighting, and less delaying and deferring of significant projects that need to be accomplished for the general betterment of all within the greater Toronto area.

If one were for a moment removed from one's own self-interest and asked the question, "What is good for the people of the greater Toronto area?" I have no doubt the answer would be clear: one unified, amalgamated Toronto, working in harmony, with one official plan for the new city of Toronto, one marketing plan for economic development and growth, one level and attractive playing field for businesses, one level of quality services throughout the new city. United we stand and divided we fall behind the competitive global economic environment, and then fundamentally all our communities and institutions suffer. We need one clear message of a pro-business attitude attracting and keeping companies, jobs and citizens of diverse economic backgrounds here in our one Toronto.

I want to thank Minister Al Leach and the Ontario government for having the courage and the political will for proposing and working towards the amalgamation of the greater Toronto area through Bill 103, the new city of Toronto. This constructive and positive change is long overdue. It truly is a ray of hope that this Ontario government has made the creation of the new city of Toronto a priority item. I think history will reward the Harris government with positive praise for having shown timely leadership in a area of concern. My family and I live in the greater Toronto area and this shall be yet another reason to continue to live and prosper in the new city of Toronto. Thank you, good luck and God bless.

**Mr Newman:** Thank you, Mr Yeretsian, for an informative and excellent presentation. I'm sure you're aware, being a resident of Scarborough, that there's a referendum or a plebiscite, or some might call it an opinion poll, being conducted across the various municipalities, Scarborough included in that, with the ballots in Scarborough being delivered in the weekly Scarborough Mirror newspaper. The same number of ballots are being delivered to

voters' homes regardless of the number of eligible voters in their home.

Mr Yeretsian, do you agree with the many of my constituents in Scarborough Centre who have told me they're not going to participate in the opinion poll because the vote is not secret? Each and every citizen, if you can believe it, must sign their name and address to the ballot. Is that democratic? Because of the manner in which the vote was conducted, should the result of this referendum, plebiscite or opinion poll, whatever you choose to call it, therefore be considered legitimate?

**Mr Yeretsian:** I'm frankly disappointed in the way the whole thing has been turning out. I think the delay-and-defer committee is behind this referendum situation. I can't believe for the life of me why these mayors, other than keeping their jobs and their own self-interest, are backing the no forces.

Not only that, I'm surprised to find that there really isn't a structured, organized yes committee, if you will. I don't see a yes committee out there per se. I see a lot of editorials from the Scarborough Mirror on down being with the no side. Not only the no side, but everyone is creating this anxiety, trying to fan the flames.

I think I'm probably speaking for the silent majority out there. There are a lot fewer individuals who have the time or inclination, unfortunately. I think the response of the small business people in Scarborough is indicative of that. They don't have the time to come out, sit down for a couple of hours, draft a statement, come down here, with all due respect, and speak to this illustrious group.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mr Yeretsian, our time is up. Thank you for coming.

#### SANJAY DHEBAR

**The Vice-Chair:** The next speaker is Sanjay Dhebar. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Sanjay Dhebar:** Good evening. My name is Sanjay Dhebar. I'm a student at Ryerson and a member of the student council there. I live just one block south of here and I'm glad to have this opportunity to come and speak.

It clearly states in the Common Sense Revolution the government's intent to get rid of bureaucracy and red tape. It's a clear indication it's being done, with reducing politicians at two levels of government.

People are quick to condemn the current government for the fact it has put through a bill without consultation. It's funny how quickly people forget about the NDP government and their non-consultation related to the social contract. I look around and see many people having an opportunity right now to be informed and to speak, the same people who are complaining that they don't have the opportunity to be heard.

Globalization: The federal government takes all the premiers with them and goes around the world to find out how we can prosper Canada. Amalgamation is a clear indication that's going to allow Toronto to have the opportunity for greater foreign investment, more jobs and more opportunity for people to succeed.

One must not compare our city's future to another, like Halifax or those in the United States. We are a different

economy and a mosaic, a highly respected community, again something people are quick to forget.

Related to the referendum, citizens are quick to demand democracy. These are the same people who demand the democratic right in court. They're in the workplace through the Canadian Constitution. This is the same Constitution that states that if a majority government takes power, that we vote in as a democratic right, it has the ability to put bills through the House without consultation.

A lot of the people coming today speak about environmental policies and different aspects of that. Unification legislation will see environmental services, such as fire, water, parks and recreation, be more efficient and in general citizens will fare better than the status quo. The current model of environmental management is not working. Unification restructuring to amalgamate environmental services into one department will make these services more efficient and save taxpayers' money without any noticeable change in services, such as fire protection.

Policies that exist now are just not working efficiently. No change for fire services except maybe a faster response time. I just can't seem to have a problem with that. The six fire departments have been working towards a common dispatch office anyway. Parks and recreation services currently rely heavily on volunteers. For example, Scarborough has 60,000 volunteers involved in recreation, and the assumption is that these volunteers will continue to exist even after unification. Let's not forget about the territorial concerns related to those individuals who are farther away from these kinds of things.

## 2030

Now I wish to focus on the municipal governments. We had a split in Metro Hall last night related to resolving this whole situation related to amalgamation. We have Barbara Hall and her little clique of socialists in the city hall conducting their own personal agenda to benefit themselves.

*Interruption.*

**The Vice-Chair:** Could I ask for silence here.

**Mr Dhebar:** We have Frances Nunziata calling her council a bunch of wackos. We have a split and controversy in Doug Holyday's Etobicoke council. Mel Lastman's flip-flop political style seems to be focusing on the trends of the time and what the public interest is. Referendums — gee, we really got confrontation on referendums and how to do it. That's why we have six different referendums going on. I really feel that six mayors are in low profile now, so what do they need to speak for? They have John Sewell as their hired scapegoat. The funny thing is that they seem to all forget to give a real alternative. That's the biggest shame.

My parents are immigrants who have succeeded in this country without the help of the government. They have a small business that just seems to be flourishing and they told me when I came here today to take the opportunity to thank the provincial government related to non-amalgamation, things they have done to benefit small businesses.

The current government is concerned with our future and ability to compete whereas the opposition seems to focus on the trends of the time. Amalgamation will allow us to constantly compete with other cities. Fortune magazine better get ready to just clamp every year the number one city in Toronto, number one city in Toronto because that's how we're going to be. In the end, I can't wait till my children are able to volunteer, possibly take part or even work in the summer Olympics when they come here to Toronto.

I welcome your questions at this time.

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you very much for coming down and making a presentation. We are already number one, so we don't have to wait. Why would you go and seek change when we are already number one? We must be doing something right. The mayors of those cities must be doing something right. Every municipality has a kitty set aside with taxes paid to those local municipalities. Do you think that the real intent of this government by introducing this bill is to get to that \$1 billion?

**Mr Dhebar:** To answer your question, if we sit around as a city and not expand ourselves, I guess that's quite similar to past governments in the last two elections. They're addressing that other cities that compete with us globally are making changes too and that's what we're doing to adapt to that.

**Mr Sergio:** I have a couple of other questions. A couple of Conservative organizations, such as the board of trade, independent, safeguarding the interest of the business community, especially the small business community, and including the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the United Way, speaking on behalf of small businesses in Metro especially, have said the increasing taxes are going to be in the neighbourhood of \$7,800, \$7,900. You, as a young man, what would it do to the existing or future businesses in Metro?

**Mr Dhebar:** Related to Metro with my family, we had the same consultation as you because I questioned this whole situation myself. We had a large Indian association of Toronto get together. I actually attended also an Iranian association and all different ethnic groups, as that's what I like to focus on, being an ethnic myself, and they all seem to be for it and saying how they're going to benefit because when you have globalization and you have individuals from other countries wanting to come here to compete with our benefits —

**Mr Sergio:** No, no, that's not the question.

**Mr Dhebar:** Yes, but you asked —

**Mr Sergio:** If you have a small business in Metro and you are hit with a \$7,800 increase per year, how would you feel?

**Mr Dhebar:** Increase in taxes?

**Mr Sergio:** Yes.

**Mr Dhebar:** I'd totally feel at a loss with all those people coming here wanting to buy and compete in Toronto as it's such a great city and has so much to offer.

**Mr Sergio:** If you were a homeowner who spent your life paying for a little house and all of a sudden you have a Premier telling you, a 75-year-old senior, "If your taxes will go up and you can't afford it, go and put a negative mortgage on your house," how would you feel?

**Mr Dhebar:** I don't think I've ever heard that. First of all, I'm a student.

**Mr Sergio:** Oh, you haven't heard that?

**Mr Dhebar:** I've never ever heard that and I'll be honest with you, I try to be neutral as far as listening and I read the Toronto Star.

**Mr Sergio:** Absolutely all the way. Yes, I can appreciate that. It's very neutral.

Would you say that —

**Mr Terence Young:** You don't need to be rude to the delegation.

**The Vice-Chair:** Order.

**Mr Sergio:** I'm sorry. With all due respect, I think I'm being ultrakind to the attendant here. I don't think I'm being rude, and I resent that interjection, Madam Chair.

Do you believe the Premier says that if we are going to establish a casino in Ontario, we are going to have a binding referendum? Do you believe that the establishment of a casino in Ontario is more important than changing the governments in Metro, which will affect the lives of every single Ontarian for years to come, perhaps generations?

**Mr Dhebar:** You're asking if the referendum should be done to consult?

**Mr Sergio:** Yes.

**Mr Dhebar:** I think a referendum —

**Mr Sergio:** What's more important, the casino or changing the way we will be governed for years to come?

**Mr Dhebar:** First of all, I don't see how with such a positive impact that the outcome of amalgamation is going to have that we need to consult. I agree that information needs to be had, but I think I'm having the opportunity right now to be informed by listening to other speakers and reading the papers. I believe I read in the Star yesterday that a lot of councillors want amalgamation at Metro council. They're the ones who represent us and we vote them in. I know my councillor wants amalgamation. I figure if I voted for that individual to represent me, he's good enough to make that decision. Related to the referendum, I believe referendum is a total disgusting way of telling a government they haven't done their job right.

**Mr Sergio:** Not according to Mr Harris.

**Mr Dhebar:** But you're asking me what I think, so I'm trying to —

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, I have to interrupt you. Time has come to an end. Thank you very much for coming here.

#### CITY OF TORONTO SAFE CITY COMMITTEE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on the City of Toronto Safe City Committee. Good evening and welcome to the standing committee. I'd like to have you introduce yourselves for the purpose of Hansard. Then you can begin.

**Ms Helen Melbourne:** My name is Helen Melbourne. I'm the co-chair of the City of Toronto Safe City Committee.

**Mr Patrick Au:** I'm Patrick Au. I'm the volunteer rep of the safe city committee.

**Mr Len Paris:** I'm Len Paris, a member of the City of Toronto Safe City Committee.

**Ms Melbourne:** First of all, I should tell you that the safe city committee hasn't taken sides. Some of us have and some of us haven't. There are those on the committee who like some of the ideas of amalgamation, there are those of us who don't and there are a lot who say they're not decided. They haven't heard enough and they don't like the rush. Really, the report I'm presenting is about the concerns we have as a committee. The one thing we all agreed on was that we're concerned that the work of the committee will be lost. So I'm just going to read what we presented.

**Mr Bisson:** It's the work of your committee?

**Ms Melbourne:** It's the work of the safe city committee. This is our report and we have a number of things that we've done.

Since 1989, the safe city committee has worked with the city of Toronto to prevent violence and promote community safety in our homes, our workplaces and on our streets.

The safe city committee consists of the mayor, three city councillors and 20 volunteer representatives of community organizations whose mandate includes the promotion of community safety. The committee is staffed by a coordinator and assistant in the Healthy City Office. The committee meets monthly and reports to Toronto city council.

The committee has three main functions:

(1) Advocacy: We identify and increase public awareness of safety issues; we work with the city of Toronto to develop policies and programs to prevent violence.

(2) Education: We provide speakers, displays, pamphlets and advice to community groups; we create workshops and forums on community safety; we maintain an extensive resource library.

(3) Consultation: We share information and create links with other organizations in Toronto and around the world.

The city of Toronto has developed a considerable reputation for its safe city initiatives, both locally and internationally. Our achievements include:

The publication A Working Guide for Planning and Designing Safer Urban Environments, which has gained international recognition for its innovative policies on making cities safer — it's now out of print and we're working on a second and expanded edition.

Funding for projects under the Breaking the Cycle of Violence program, which has improved community resources for prevention of violence.

Popular programs, products and services like free self-defence courses offered at city-run community recreation centres; pamphlets and posters on safety tips, making underground garages safer etc; forums and workshops on park safety — we've got quite a bit we've done on that, including a whole publication on actually how to do it; community success stories, and again we have a whole lot of things that we've done on that, and dealing with the media.

The recently published Building on Success: A Community Safety Strategy for the City of Toronto is the result of consultation with 125 different community organizations.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has described the City of Toronto Safe City Committee as "a good example of a local government structure which fosters community involvement in decision-making." We have worked closely with the provincial Solicitor General's office on their provincial crime prevention strategy, which stresses the importance of local government involvement in the prevention of crime and violence. Toronto's safe city initiative was the first in Canada and has been the model for many municipal initiatives, including the cities of Kitchener, Calgary and Vancouver. The United States Conference of Mayors has distributed A Working Guide to all of its member municipalities, and the Ontario Police College includes it in its training materials for police officers.

Poll after poll show crime and community safety to be the number one concern for Torontonians. Toronto's recent ranking by Fortune magazine as the best city in the world for work and family was largely due to its reputation as the safest city in North America.

We are concerned that this successful initiative, which deals with the most important concern to the citizens of Toronto, is threatened by amalgamation into a megacity, as proposed by Bill 103. This concern is based on two facts.

First, the safe city committee's success is based on aspects of the city of Toronto's corporate culture which are unique among Metro-area municipalities: a history of influential, issue-based citizen advisory committees and a willingness to consider proactive public health policies. This corporate culture, supported by the voters of the city of Toronto, is the product of over 100 years of citizen advocacy and involvement in local decision-making and is unlikely to be replicated in the proposed megacity.

The safe city committee's strength lies in its representation by community groups. A list of our membership is attached. As you can see, it includes ethnosecific organizations, residents' associations, agencies that serve homeless people, advocacy groups etc. Our members consist of citizens who, due to firsthand experience in their communities, are able to give specialized input on matters of community safety in Toronto. Despite or perhaps because of its diversity, we are able to achieve consensus on our approach. One commonality is our understanding of central city issues such as high-density housing, a concentration of homeless people and others at extreme risk of violence, and an extremely heterogenous community.

Another source of consensus is our belief that dealing with the root causes of crime, such as violence in the home and lack of economic and social opportunity, pays off in the long term. The Breaking the Cycle of Violence grants were created because we believe that local communities know their crime problems and solutions best. By reaching children with conflict resolution programs, by developing dating violence materials and providing recreation programs for teenagers, by training doctors and nurses to respond appropriately if they suspect a patient has been assaulted, we reach at-risk groups before violence escalates. We believe these small grants use public money effectively to improve public safety.

Our present local government is accessible. We spend a lot of time talking with our 16 local councillors and our

mayor, both to get their perspective on local issues and to ensure that we are effective in our actions. Usually policy and program directions we suggest to city council are accepted. Local councillors participate in activities that keep them in touch with constituents' safety concerns, such as community safety audits. The reason the safe city committee was created was because a local councillor listened to neighbourhood concerns about safety and worked over the next year with politicians and community groups to create a strategy to address these concerns.

If there are 44 councillors in the proposed megacity, each with 50,000 constituents and a greatly expanded range of issues to address, how will they be able to spend that kind of time responding to community concerns? With responsibilities that previously belonged to regional government, such as public transit, policing, and welfare, added to local government duties such as urban planning, roads and rubbish, parks and community facilities, how will councillors be able to support issue-based committees, even on a topic as crucial as community safety?

Even assuming that the safe city committee was to continue, how could the safe city committee address the concerns of four times the population without either expanding the membership to the point where we become unworkable, or else leaving out crucial voices? Could we achieve the same level of consensus and effectiveness when the concerns of inner suburbs are added to the central city? Or would the power of local government, with its intimate knowledge of issues and places important to its citizens, be dissipated?

Second, other Metro-area municipalities and Metro government itself have proven by their political and spending priorities that they are unwilling to prioritize the prevention of violence and promotion of community safety. We are concerned that a merged council, especially with new spending obligations downloaded on to them, will be unlikely to consider what is for most of them a new initiative, even one with proven benefits.

Scarborough and North York have used A Working Guide as the basis for their planning guidelines. Public health units in York, East York and Etobicoke distribute our pamphlets. Community groups across Metro call us with their safety concerns. Despite benefiting from the city of Toronto's programs and policies, no other municipality has a long-term, citizen-based safe city initiative reporting directly to its council. No other municipality has a grants program whose primary purpose is the prevention of violence. No other municipality has stated in so many words that "community safety is a priority for city council," and has backed up this commitment with a corporate strategy.

For that matter, no other municipality has a grants program that responds to homelessness, drug abuse or AIDS. These issues exist in other municipalities. Perhaps these issues are more visible in the central city, or perhaps this is a case of the city of Toronto's unique emphasis on proactive public health policies. In any case, the proposed amalgamation represents at best a watering down of what makes the city of Toronto unique and at worst a loss of all that makes Toronto the best place to live and work in the world.

Even without Bill 103, the potential effects of provincial downloading of social services are ruinous to community safety in Toronto. Already tense tradeoffs between public transit and community services, between policing and health care, will be exacerbated. The imposition of social service costs could well set off a spiral of increased poverty, increased taxes, flight of business, reduced employment opportunities and increased crime that would offset any local government crime prevention efforts.

But the proposed amalgamation plunges local government into chaos just when a coherent response to these threats is needed most. Bill 103, if adopted, will erase the city of Toronto's unique perspective on social issues such as community safety. For these reasons, as well as many others which we do not have time to enumerate under the limitations of the present public consultation process, we urge you to reconsider Bill 103.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. You have actually gone past the allotted time. I appreciate your coming here this evening to bring us that.

**Ms Melbourne:** Thank you very much for the opportunity.

#### SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on the Small Business Association, John Anderson. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr John Anderson:** My name is John Anderson. I have operated a retail store on Yonge Street for 30 years. I have three stores in the city of Toronto. I've had three stores within three blocks of Queen's Park and I've been very directly involved with my neighbourhood, which happens to be your neighbourhood, Queen's Park.

Tonight I'd like to talk about small business. It seems like tonight is small business night because I saw three other people here talking about small business. I've been involved with small business for the last three years, mainly on a federal level, basically involved in the David and Goliath struggle between small business and the banks. It's been a very informative, educational process in that small business has become a very major economic power, not just here in Toronto but across the country.

I'd like to give you a couple of statistics, and a lot of people aren't aware of this: 50% of our employment in this country comes from small business; 45% of our GDP comes from small business; all the new growth in the last 10 years has come from the small business sector.

**2050**

I was doing a presentation in the west wing here about a year ago. We had a committee room up on the second floor and we just happened to be reversed. Our committee room got reversed with the Tory caucus. They were having a meeting up there and all of a sudden all the Tory caucus members were coming into our room and vice versa and it all got mixed up. They kept coming in and wondering, "Why are you here?" I said, "Well, this is the small business meeting." I had four groups come up to me in groups of four saying, "We're not into small business, we're into big business." This shocked me because small business actually is big business and I did not expect to hear that.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Anderson:** Yes, this was up in the west wing. Fortunately, one individual actually took the time to come and talk to me about, "What do you do?" So tonight I'm going to give you a little idea of what we do.

There are a lot of arguments and I'm sure you've heard the same arguments, but tonight what I'm going to do is talk about grass roots and I'm going to talk about my neighbourhood and your neighbourhood.

**Yonge Street:** We have a lot of visions of Yonge Street. They're not always good. It's seen better days. I'm sure that in most cases if you can avoid walking on Yonge Street, you'll do that. Our association has been dealing with local government. We've also been dealing with the provincial and federal governments over the last three years, but in most cases we've found that our problems are immediate, sitting in front of us, and we end up having to go to city hall to work out these problems.

I'm going to give you two examples, probably the biggest ones that affected us last year, 1996. Last year, district 9 regional assessment office raised the assessments of approximately 85 small businesses on Yonge Street some 300%. This had to do with the fact that certain of the locations — and I am talking about Yonge Street from Bloor down to College. This is the area I'm talking about. This is the area of our association. In 1996, we had 80 small businesses on Yonge Street below Bloor, above College, receiving a tax increase of up to 300%. I can't tell you what sort of effect this had on all the merchants who were receiving these assessment notices.

How did our association respond to this problem? We advised the landlords to write the local Tory MPs to get some sort of explanation how they could expect them to pay a 300% increase on their taxes. Most of their properties were already leased with fixed leases, fixed incomes and they were having a hard time paying the taxes as it was.

Then we contacted the city of Toronto, the mayor's office, we contacted most of the tenants on the street and we also contacted district 9 assessment office. Sitting down, we called a meeting with those people — and this happened within a three-week to four-week period. I did a paper, this is the paper right here, and I showed all these articles here. These are all articles from various newspapers over 1995-96, depicting Yonge Street and the problems of Yonge Street.

What we're talking about is the downtown core. We're talking about the hole in the middle of the doughnut. We're talking about a lot of problems: "Street of Shame"; "Shabby Street gets Typical Toronto Help." I said to the district commissioner for taxation assessment, "How could you be charging businesses on Yonge Street 300% more when it's quite obvious that Yonge Street is in very bad shape and in direct need of help?"

Well, we had a lot of meetings after that, and these are local government meetings. We had a lot of meetings with the assessment office and we were able to work out a solution to that problem, but it took a combined operation of several departments and councillors constantly involved in meetings to save a section of Yonge Street which is in your neighbourhood from becoming ghettoized.

A business that has a 350% tax disability is not going to be rented. It's going to get boarded up. Most of the landlords, and there were two landlords in particular, were going to lose their properties because they could not raise the taxes to cover the increase.

This is a case where what I'm trying to say tonight is, our small business association has a lot of direct involvement with local government. I've been involved with the federal government and I know how difficult that process is, but local government has been quite accessible to us. We are very concerned that if this local government becomes larger, are we going to be able, when we have a life-and-death situation such as this problem here, to get accessibility to a councillor who has to four times the workload?

I want to move on to the second one. Queen's Park is really important to us. The largest employer within my neighbourhood is sitting right here. The provincial government hires probably 15,000 people; whatever way the provincial government goes, our business goes. We've been suffering a great deal over the last two, two and a half years. We've been in sort of a state of shock. It's been like a war zone. It's been one problem after another and it reflects on our small, local businesses a lot.

One of our biggest problems was, similar to the lady who just came in here, having a safe street. We had very serious problems with drugs two blocks from where I sit right now. I don't know if you ever walk down Yonge Street, if you ever get propositioned, "Do you want to buy this or that?" This is another case where we had to deal with local government. We didn't deal with one level of local government; we dealt probably with about three or four different departments. We dealt with the parks department.

What's the parks department got to do with drugs? Well, dealing with this particular group of people selling drugs on Yonge Street, just off Yonge Street, we started probably a year and a half ago. The first thing is, we had the parks department come in and set up fences around a boulevard where they used to sit. After about eight months, we moved them from that location — and they moved; they moved a block south. Then we had the department of works come in and we increased the lighting. So we've got a lot of people cooperating here. They moved south.

Then they moved into a park, so we had to go back to the parks department and we had to take the benches out, we had to cut the bushes down. Then we had to hold a local meeting and we had to make a dog run. We figured if we made a dog run and people brought their dogs there, then people wouldn't feel comfortable selling drugs there and people could walk through the park. I mean, if I'm trying to sell a dress to a lady, she does not want to be confronted by a drug pusher. She wants to feel comfortable. She wants to be able to buy something.

These are the sorts of problems that my association has had to deal with. That's why we call ourselves the Small Business Association. These are real problems. If we do not have accessibility to our local government, our businesses dissipate; they disappear. People don't want to come around. They don't feel comfortable. This is a very large problem in our downtown, urban main streets.

I've been fortunate, or unfortunate, enough to have a retail location at Yonge and Dundas and I watched what happened at Yonge and Dundas for 12 years. I tried to work with Metro. I tried to work with the city on it. But the biggest problem at Yonge and Dundas was, there was no group, there was no association that cared enough to get involved. I found that when an association cares enough and approaches the local government on the different levels and the different departments of local government, you get a response. If you don't care, they don't care. If you don't talk up, forget it, nothing happens.

So I found that nothing happened down at Yonge and Dundas and finally I gave up and moved out. I left a 12,000-square-foot store. I did over \$1 million a year there. I was fed up. No one gave a shit. No one cared, so that it was it. I said, "No one else cares; I'm out of there." I had another store up the street. It's about 7,000 square feet. So I'm up there and all of a sudden we have a lot of problems on the street.

Local government is really important to us. We do not want to see larger government. We really feel that if we have accessibility to a local councillor — this could disappear if we have a larger council.

These were probably two of the cases that meant the most to our association this year.

We have to remember that we're going to be creating this entirely new situation, but what's going to happen to Queen's Park? You only have to go south of the border and look at the White House. You only have to know the homicide rate, the fact that you can't walk after dark. All these sorts of things make a viable city or a city which you leave after dark. You lock your doors. You get in your cars and you go away.

I think we have a very fortunate thing happening here in this city. I do not feel at all threatened to walk up and down Yonge Street at night. It took us maybe a year and a half to create a situation where the drug dealers had finally given up. They've left. Right now, it is not happening over there. Numerous arrests, a lot of continuous effort, and it didn't happen once, it didn't happen twice, it took three times.

I'm really concerned and I'm here tonight to say a lot of small businesses don't have access to local government. At the particular moment in the downtown core we've had very good response and I'm very worried what will happen if we go into a megacity.

There are a lot of other arguments, and I'm sure you've heard them all. I don't think I want to go into that, but tonight I've come here just to talk about the fact that the downtown core of the largest city in Canada has special problems, and I don't think large government is equipped to deal with them. I don't think that you, in a lot of cases, would want to have to deal with crack dealers and dope dealers and trying to solve those problems. It takes a concerted, very local effort to do that.

I would like to probably rest there, except to say that small business is pretty practical. We have a pretty good grass-roots handle on basic economic policies. We probably pay more taxes than anybody else I can think of. We pay provincial sales tax, we pay GST, we pay business tax, we pay commercial tax. I have two com-

mercial buildings I pay tax on. I pay residential tax. We're involved with government all the way down the line.

But what bothers me the most of what I've been watching and reading over the last month is that when I see polarized politics, I don't see the problem being dealt with. Nothing is black and white. I can probably find pros on one side and pros on the other side, but as soon as we start digging in, basically everybody suffers.

Right now, over the last three months, I can tell you for a fact, because I'm on a first-name basis with almost every merchant on Yonge Street, our business is down. We're hurting real bad. We're in a war zone. It may not be totally significant to the provincial government, but I tell you, every merchant over on Yonge Street is wondering why. Why are things so bad? We're shell-shocked. I wish we weren't. We hear about all these improvements in the economy but it's not happening on our street.

One of the good barometers is just to watch the boarded-up stores, the empty stores, the for-leases. You can take my word for it or you can go over to Yonge Street and start counting them, because I make a point of counting them. I look at, were they recent or were they a long-time merchant? How long were they here? Am I really going to miss them? Over the last three or four months, we're up to 32 in my district right now. This scares me. I talk to everybody. They had a very, very poor season. We're hanging in there. It's tough. It's been very tough, and that makes us even more apprehensive as to what's going to happen with the megacity.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Anderson. You've exceeded your time. We appreciate your coming here to present to the committee.

That is the end of our presentations for this evening, so we stand adjourned until Monday morning at 9 o'clock.

*The committee adjourned at 2104.*

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*Mr Terence H.	Young (Halton Centre / -Centre PC)

*\*In attendance / présents*

### **Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:**

Mr Jim	Brown (Scarborough West / -Ouest PC) for Mr Tascona
Mr Douglas B.	Ford (Etobicoke-Humber PC) for Mrs Ross
Mr John	Gerretsen (Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles L) for Mr Gravelle
Mr Steve	Gilchrist (Scarborough East / -Est PC) for Mr Hardeman
Mr John	Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale PC) for Mr Danford
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Mr Gerard	Kennedy (York South / -Sud L) for Mr Gerretsen
Mr Dan	Newman (Scarborough Centre / -Centre PC) for Mr Flaherty
Mr John L.	Parker (York East / -Est PC) for Mr Stewart
Mr Tony	Silipo (Dovercourt ND) for Mr Len Wood

### **Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

Mr Gilles	Bisson (Cochrane South / -Sud ND)
Ms Marilyn	Churley (Riverdale ND)
Mr Alvin	Curling (Scarborough North / -Nord L)
Mr Peter	Kormos (Welland-Thorold ND)
Ms Elizabeth	McLaren, assistant deputy minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

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ISSN 1180-5218

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 36th Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

### Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 17 February 1997

### Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 17 février 1997

Standing committee on  
general government

Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales

City of Toronto Act, 1996

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto

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Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



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Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430

Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Monday 17 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Lundi 17 février 1997

*The committee met at 0905 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

DAVE AUSTIN

**The Acting Chair (Mr Dan Newman):** Good morning and welcome to the standing committee on general government hearings on Bill 103. Our first presenter today is Mr Dave Austin. Welcome, Mr Austin. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation. If there's any time available within the 10 minutes after your presentation, there will be questions from the Liberal Party.

**Mr Dave Austin:** My name is Dave Austin. I reside in Scarborough in the Rouge Valley area. Just a very small background: I came to this country 40 years ago with not a penny in my pocket. Through the opportunities this country gave me, I think I've worked my way up to the lower middle class, if I can use that expression.

I was retired at 55 on a downsizing by the company I worked for, which was probably the best thing that could have happened to me. It gave me an opportunity to look at running a business, and with the way things were 10 years ago, I chose not to start a business because of the uncertainty within this province. I will leave it at that. So that's me.

All this has left me with a background mindset that big government, large bureaucracies and regulations stifle wealth generation. Wealth generation is the thing that will drive jobs, that will allow the people of Ontario — all of them, not just the rich — to become more affluent, more able to meet the needs of their lives. Throughout my career, throughout my life I've tried hard and I've looked for governments that do that. I find that big governments try to redistribute the pie, they take too much of the pie and they don't help in trying to make the pie larger. The government that I support looks to do that.

I'm not here to discuss the Who Does What or the AVA. I don't believe that's appropriate here. I think both of those would have been implemented regardless, in the first case to improve accountability, and in the second, tax fairness. I fully support those but I will leave them there. I'll stick to Bill 103.

Bill 103 eliminates completely one level of government. I have had the opportunity in the last few years to perceive the roadblocks that provides to business people. That was the reason why I chose not to go ahead with running a business. The roadblocks, the varying bylaws and things that are thrown in people's way are so high that it becomes not worth the trouble.

If amalgamation does go through to create wealth and job creation — I think it will — it also gets rid of 61 high-cost councillors and mayors. That's about a \$12-million saving if you just take that on its own. Beyond that there are approximately 180,000 bylaws and regulations in Metro and the municipalities. It gives my heart great delight to see that we would only have one council producing more bylaws and regulations rather than seven.

I look at the numbers prepared by KPMG, and I've done many business cases myself. I understand the variables and I have some belief that should the bill pass, if the process of implementation is done well, then I think those savings can be accrued: \$300 per taxpayer, not peanuts, and if spread appropriately comes to a great deal for poor people in this city and in the area.

One of the things that bothered me about previous presentations is that so many people have used the Halifax incident as, "What a disaster." I can only say that if as human beings we can't learn from Halifax and do it better, then we shouldn't be doing it.

I'll say no more on the mathematics and the statistics, because I think last week George Fierheller, the chairman of the Metro board of trade, said it eloquently and I think I'm wasting your time if I address that.

I'd like to go more into the democracy issue, which seems to be the area that's been raised by so many people presenting. Twenty years of studies and debate: Frankly, I had absolutely no question in my mind that the government was going to do something like this. I didn't know, exactly, the Common Sense Revolution document. I talked to my candidate and he told me they were going to reduce government in all levels if possible, in those under their jurisdiction, and I was well aware that municipal government was under provincial rule. I expected them to carry it out and I look forward to this going through in a well-done way.

One thing I would like to point out which really upset me: I received on Friday three pages of "No" propaganda in my mail, at my cost, from the city of Scarborough. I think it's absolutely impudent. I'll go even further. This, which is my ballot, asks me to name it, sign it, has a stamp on it so I can mail it with my signature, my identification, my vote open to the public.

I thought we had secret ballot in this country. That was my understanding of democracy in this country when I

came here. Further, I am awfully concerned that anything like this could be intercepted anywhere from when I drop it into whatever I drop it into and it comes out at the other end into a ballot box. I have serious concerns about the integrity of the process. No more.

There are some serious people issues about this that come through very clearly in the presentations I've seen, and I've seen many. People have been knowledgeable, they've been articulate, but the most obvious emotion was fear of change. Few of the arguments I have heard are any more credible or factual than Mr Leach's arguments. Quite frankly most were less convincing. Many were just statements of disaster — Chicken Little. Clearly a number of speakers have been misinformed or misled by those who stand to lose, and that's not unreasonable; we understand the game. But some were fearful of change in itself and the uncertainty this whole thing was causing. The biggest concern I had was the fear that people appear to have of change, vision and change.

Margaret Thatcher was a visionary. She had the steel to focus all the resources, the people to make her vision reality. She didn't do anything except what drove the country towards that vision. Today Britain has the lowest debt per capita and the highest employment level in Europe. Pierre Trudeau was a great leader — wrong vision. We have a very local situation: Mayor McCallion. You drive through Mississauga and you fully understand how she has driven to a vision, as opposed to some of the other leaders. This will possibly get under somebody's skin, but never mind.

I think Mike Harris has a vision of Ontario. He sees a larger pie, he sees a piece of pie for anyone willing to work for it, a safety net for the truly disadvantaged, no special status for any person or group, and that's where I would like Ontario to go for the rest of my life. Bill 103, I think, is part of that vision. Let's make it happen. It's a tough road. The people ramifications need to be articulated better and somehow the fears diminished in a rational way.

Mayor Holyday last week had what I thought was a good idea: elected chairmen of the local committees. That would put aside some of the concern of not being close enough to my elected representatives. Give them a stipend of \$5,000 a year. It isn't going to cost very much and might cure a very big problem.

I believe the transition team is an absolute need, with the ability to steer the setup of this organization in the right direction. I believe the unions need to know what the rules will be when this thing is implemented and they need to be brought on side. Contracting out is absolutely imperative — I agree with Mr Cox, the American consultant, who presented to you last week — to gain the maximum advantage from the change. Let's start right. Let's not do it wrong and then try to change it again.

Finally, a sunset clause on all bylaws and regulations for this new organization should be put in place, along with a one-for-one law which says that if you create a new bylaw, you must kill another one. We have to stop this total proliferation of rules that everyone has to understand. Thank you.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** Mr Austin, I have several questions, actually, but I have one on the

issue of process. Does it bother you a little bit or very much in terms of how this government has decided to deal with Metro? Here he's decided that we won't have a democratic right to decide how we amalgamate, if we're going to do that. He simply said, "This is good for Metro, and like it or lump it, this is what you get." Are you disturbed by that a little bit?

**Mr Austin:** No, I'm not, Mr Marchese. As I said, I understood full well that something like this was going to happen. I didn't know what for, but I understood very well that a level of government was going to be removed. I voted for that. I do not have any qualms about that. I think the people of Metro would have known that also.

**The Acting Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Austin.

#### PETER PATERSON

**The Acting Chair:** Our next presenter is Peter Paterson. Good morning, Mr Paterson. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mr Peter Peterson:** I was here on Wednesday night, so I got a lay of the land in this room. I find the setup a little bit confusing, that the Conservatives are on my left. I'm not sure why, but I always thought they were on the right.

I also want to apologize for the snowfall that covered up the 20,000 footprints on the front lawn that were left on Saturday afternoon. I'm not bouncing up the numbers. Each person has two feet, so there were 10,000 people in front of the Parliament Buildings on Saturday and it was quite a display of emotion and concern about Bill 103 and Bill 104.

I have a small business in downtown Toronto at College and Bathurst. I'm a commercial photographer. I own my own building, so of course I'm worried about taxes like everybody else. I'm what you call one of your 905ers. I live in Caledon and I have huge concerns on that side of the fence as well. It seems that the 416 exchange people are the only ones getting excited, but the 905ers are going to get very excited as well.

I got involved with Bill 103 in November, when I wrote a letter to Mr Harris asking him to have some common sense and stop the megacity bill. He wrote a nice letter back on December 6 saying, "We are considering all options very carefully," and that my "comments were a valued contribution to the review process" and that he would be sure to keep the points I raised in mind. It doesn't sound as though he has paid any attention to my views or any others who disagree with his agenda.

I read with humour in the debate in Saturday's Globe and Mail "Mega Forum" article Mr Gilchrist's statement, "People have the opportunity to come in and express their points of view, but I have no doubt that most people who want to speak on this issue have made their minds up." Of course we have; the same as you have. There is no movement here. There will be no movement unless — well, I'm not sure what will stop it, but the Conservatives have their minds made up. We're coming here, we're expressing our views, it's very nice to be able to speak. It's a very democratic process, but the actual process is undemocratic because we have an elected group that is deciding everything for us.

I use an analogy of an innocent accused who has a gun pointed to their head while they're told to write a confession that the confessor wants to see and, in the end, has a few minutes to do it. This is how it was with the six mayors' report and the one month they had under the gun. The point is, the Conservatives have the gun, they have their finger on the trigger. I would like to see them put the gun down for a little while, in fact put it away forever and start talking to people and considering what other people's views are.

We are fighting a bill that is being set up so that it cannot even be challenged in court. You certainly have your minds made up. Megacity and mega-week are about money. Without amalgamation and then downloading you cannot pay for your promised 30% tax cut. This is what I think is at the root of the whole problem.

This tax cut is what got the Conservatives elected. Two weeks before the election, the Liberals were ahead at the polls. Then Mr Harris pushed what I call the candy button and now the candy has to be paid for. We have a debt that keeps growing every day which cannot be reversed until the deficit is brought to zero. It's like having a mortgage that you never ever pay any principal on and keep adding to every year. This has been going on for the last 40 years or so, mostly under Conservative rule. That is the truth. There have been a few Liberal years and there have been a few NDP years, but mostly under Conservative control. The people did not spend this money. Politicians and bureaucrats did.

**0920**

To me, the 30% tax cut makes no sense. No one in this province can afford it until the debt is reversed. It took 40 or more years to get in this mess and there are no quick fixes to get out. It will take years to pay off the debt — maybe 35 or 40 more. It cannot be done by downloading to the next level of government. It is still our money that needs to be used to get your fiscal house in order. Stop looking to the lower level of government as your scapegoat. You must look for ways to save money within the provincial expenses. You cannot save money by giving a group of top bureaucrats 27% raises, and I would actually like one of the Conservative members to explain to me why that 27% raise had to be given.

You cannot save money by spending \$1 million to advertise your agenda. That was the pamphlet that came to us — this gentleman was saying he objects to money being spent by Scarborough for the pamphlet, but the pamphlet that came to the citizens early on about Bill 103 was paid for by provincial revenue and the advertising that went along with it added up to \$1 million.

You cannot save money by building a national trade centre at the CNE for \$180 million. Now that was a combination of federal, provincial and Metro money, but still it's money that's ill spent, and you cannot save money by allowing politicians to triple-dip. But I have an idea and this one is for free. You can save money by getting rid of the EHT.

I could never understand how a portion of the health care costs could be put on the backs of employers. This allowed health care costs to be advertised as free — now we know this was brought in under the Liberal government, unfortunately, and the NDP government carried it

on — well, they are free for many, including all civil servants, whose EHT is paid for by the taxpayer. All of us should pay a portion towards health care and it should be done by a 2% add-on to income tax, singled out as a health tax.

The Minister of Revenue would be responsible for its collection and this means no more EHT bureaucracy, which was set up to handle this whole thing. It never made any sense to me. I want to pay for my health care. I'm a small employer right now. Under the \$400,000 exemption, I get it free. I don't like that. I want to pay for my health care. I think everybody in this room should pay a portion of their income tax towards health care.

Stay within your own jurisdiction. Imagine the federal government looking at the 10 provinces and seeing 10 parks departments, 10 health departments etc, and saying, "Amalgamation, amalgamation." I think the provincial politicians would probably go ballistic and tell the feds to stay in national affairs.

It was interesting to listen to Mr Harris squeal when the federal Liberals announced the moving of an air force base from North Bay to Winnipeg. It was also interesting to listen to Mr Harris boasting in early January that his tax cut was working towards economic recovery. The first 15% had just kicked in a week earlier. The \$2 or \$3 more that people had received on one paycheque made the economic recovery. What political — and I won't use the word; it's not very nice. I can't believe this man believes what he's saying. The economic recovery is happening slowly because we have low interest rates and our dollar is very low against the American dollar and our exports are very high. That's what's driving this, not a 30% tax cut that just kicked in.

I have no more notes, but I want to talk about the town of Caledon where I live. I think the city of Peel is coming at us. We have a facilitator in the 905 area named Milt Farrow and he's listening right now, but I think his agenda is to tell people what they should do. I believe it's going to be the city of Peel. We're 34,000 people in a large rural area. Put us with 750,000 people from Mississauga and Brampton, we will have one representative on a council of approximately 15, if you work it at 50,000 population per council member, and we will have no say.

It's a very unique area. Mr Leach has already stepped in and changed the gravel policy to the detriment of the whole region. This was originally set up by town council and also regional council and he has just overridden it. He has put thumb marks all over a map saying gravel can be extracted here, there and everywhere. It's devastating to us. We will find that we're just paved over, as Brampton was. Brampton was paved over by Bill Davis and Armstrong Bros and you can see the results. We do not want that in Caledon. We will fight with everything we can to stop an amalgamation of Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon.

I'd like to say two more things. I'd like to introduce a new word to you that I heard from a fellow I used to work for. He was a German fellow and he had a lot of his language mixed up, but he had a word he called "idiocracy." It's a combination of the word "bureaucracy" and "idiocy" and I think it applies in this case. I'm sorry, but that is my feeling.

Also, this is called a hearing. I don't think very many people are actually listening. Listening requires understanding as well.

One final thing: I'd like to thank John Sewell for all the work he has done. He's being labelled by the Conservatives as a lefty loose cannon. He's anything but. He has more integrity than any politician who has ever served in a jurisdiction in Ontario. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Chair:** Thank you, Mr Paterson. You've effectively exhausted your time.

**Mr Paterson:** That's okay. I hope everybody listened to me.

**The Acting Chair:** I'm sure they did. Our next presenter is Jason Kandankery. No? Then our next presenter is Carol Freeman.

**Mr Marchese:** He's here.

**The Acting Chair:** He's here. Great. Mr Kandankery.

**Interjection:** He's asking if he can reverse. Can he go after the next person?

**Ms Carol Freeman:** I'm ready to go, if that's all right.

#### CAROL FREEMAN

**The Acting Chair:** Carol Freeman then, please. Good morning.

**Ms Freeman:** Good morning.

Bill 103 is insulting and I am angry. That anger has motivated me to speak out and work towards the bill's withdrawal.

Why is this happening? How is this happening? Is there a different solution? What is this legislation about? It's about devaluing and reducing the number of elected persons, a play to a cynical public, which at the same time disenfranchises them. It's about centralizing power at Queen's Park. It's about downloading to the lowest level of taxation to reduce provincial spending, an American neo-conservative strategy. It's about keeping an election promise to reduce taxes. It's about centralizing power in education to reduce costs. It's about privatizing services but it's also about the loss of local autonomy and accountability. There is a hidden agenda here disguised as amalgamation.

In Bill 103 there is little detail or explanation on how things are to be in North America's best city, but there are pages of detail about takeover powers of the trustees and the transition team. There will be no recourse for citizens to the courts for any changes made by these appointed officials. They will be above the law. They will be all-powerful — too powerful.

The passage of this bill removes our duly elected representatives with the stroke of a pen. As we speak, the financial affairs in our city have been taken over by an appointed troika which has the power to reverse decisions taken since December 17. As well, there will be a transition team appointed to manage and to make recommendations to the Minister of Municipal Affairs on further legislative amendments. Talk about putting the cart before the horse. We want the public consultation now, before this legislation is passed; that is democracy.

This bill gives power to appointed officials to hire, to change and to decide on severance packages. These officials have the power to completely control reserve

funds built up by municipal taxation for provincial purposes. Bill 103 is the cover for controlling any and all money each municipality might have. If this is not autocratic, what is it called? Do members of this committee supporting this legislation realize this and have they read the fine print? The government committee members would do well to refer to their own newspaper, the Globe and Mail, and the quote of Junius which appears on the masthead: "The subject who is truly loyal to the chief magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures."

0930

Your supporters perhaps don't realize the ramifications of this legislation for their future. It will take months, and perhaps years in some cases, for the effects to be felt in the pockets of the better-off, but the effects will be swift for the poorest in our community. As well, the costs of the trustees and transition team, who will be accountable only to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, will have to be paid for by the municipalities. This is insulting and contemptible at best.

There is an oxymoron here as well. The government rhetoric is about less government, more efficiencies, making things smaller and less complicated, yet the government is replacing the small and accountable councils with a larger, less accessible government. Megacity would have a population of more than two million served by 44 councillors and one head of council, which would begin business in January 1998. But it will possibly also have neighbourhood committees. Is it any wonder the population is confused and cynical?

I believe this legislation plays to that notion: Confuse them, get it done quickly, make it irreversible. Don't worry about democracy, which allows for discussion with those affected — that takes time and costs money. The bottom line is this government's only consideration. We now have heard from a Conservative backbencher that your so-called savings have just been guesses, ones that sound good.

There's no research to show that amalgamating Metro Toronto will save money. On the other hand, we have heard that American cities, which this government likes to use as role models, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, are now looking at ways to reverse that move. Canadians often use US ideas as role models, but the megacity is one which should be discarded. It will not cost less but more. The cost to the quality of life will be unbearable.

The head of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation states that their research shows, "This plan by the government will produce higher costs and higher taxes," the exact opposite effect of what everyone wants.

The megacity bill to amalgamate Metro Toronto is also about education and the downloading to municipalities of social services. This legislation not only affects Metro Toronto but all of Ontario. The people of Ontario who think Toronto is whining again should look closely at this legislation and know that it'll be coming to play in a council chamber and neighbourhood near them. I was at a meeting a few weeks ago and heard representatives from Flamborough, Elora, Kanata and Nepean who don't like or want amalgamation. It is being cynically forced on them by this provincial government.

The strategy to make changes in Ontario is being carried out in exactly the same way as a nasty corporate takeover: move in quick and dirty, make changes fast so people will not have a chance for analysis, let alone comprehension. This shows complete contempt for the intelligence of the electorate.

I would like to remind the committee there is only one taxpayer. What is downloaded still has to be paid for by the same citizens. This government is moving the tax bill to the most regressive kind of tax. This will cause a more divisive society. We will have the rich against the poor, the employed against the unemployed, the young against the old.

This is another hit to the poorest of our community. Municipalities, in order to survive, will have to introduce user fees for services which are now covered in property tax or privatize services. Higher-income earners will think and begin to believe that this is okay. They can afford user fees. This is what this government wants. Their policies are for the well-off, but they will punish the poor.

I believe another government strategy is to play to and encourage the divisive rhetoric that people in other parts of Ontario hate Toronto. But Toronto is the heart of Ontario, like it or not, and we all know when the heart is weak the limbs are also weakened. Toronto is the place where people from all over Ontario come for culture, for post-secondary education, for entertainment, for sports events, for special medical treatment; in short, to their capital city. Toronto will remain a livable city only if the heart is strengthened, and this will in turn strengthen the rest of the province.

Time and time again, the city of Toronto has been considered one of the best cities in the world. Large companies don't have to encourage their executives to move here. They clamour to come to a safe, livable city. Why would we then not improve upon that designation instead of escalating its decline? The city of Toronto has a lively, healthy and safe downtown core where business and commerce are balanced with neighbourhoods which abut those commercial districts. Toronto's strength is in its diverse neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods are similar to small towns within the large city, and that is why I have lived here so happily for almost 40 years.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, people in Toronto saved their city from a Metro plan to savage their neighbourhoods with expressways: the cross-town and the Spadina. We heard doom and gloom then, but the centre of Toronto was preserved for the commerce and tourism which we all enjoy today by a then enlightened Tory government, and might I suggest that you bring back Bill Davis.

In the 1994 Toronto municipal election, voters showed their preference for keeping local councils and eliminating the Metro tier of government. The provincial government is ignoring that result and now doing the opposite. As well, the Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs have stated many times that they will not take into consideration the results of any referenda held in the next few weeks. This kind of statement is more dangerous than the separatist government in Quebec. At least the Quebec government consults its constituents and abides by the referendum results.

My solution: Study Canadian and American amalgamated cities, look at the results and let us examine those results. The media have a responsibility to help provide the facts, not the ideologies. Review the Trimmer report, which was done for you in opposition. It recommended keeping local governments and getting rid of the Metro tier of government. Review the Golden and Crombie reports, which addressed the problems of Metro and the GTA. Look at how governments might work together for the greater good of the province as a whole. We all want the same things: efficiencies, reasonable costs, accountability, accessibility and neighbourhoods left intact.

Let's not take a jackhammer to a problem when a pair of scissors would do. I believe this can be accomplished without the destruction of communities by amalgamation. I ask you to withdraw this legislation and instead to put out a white paper for study and public discussion.

Remember that whatever hurt you inflict upon another, you also inflict upon yourself.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for your presentation. You've effectively used up your allotted time, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward and making your presentation this morning.

#### JASON KANDANKERY

**The Chair:** Would Jason Kandankery please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jason Kandankery:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Jason, as you heard. I'm a student at York University. Sorry for being late this morning. I had to come from class, but I'm here now. I'm actually taking urban planning and I've been studying this whole issue of amalgamation. My paper isn't finished, but to this point I really have been hard-pressed — and I've looked at this with a very open, objective mind — to find the benefits of doing something like this. I can see short-term fiscal savings. I don't see anything that will be beneficial towards Toronto, towards Metro, in the long-term.

One of the scariest prospects of amalgamation that I've come to discover is the fate of the urban planning departments of the various municipal governments, especially the city of Toronto, which has one of the most forward-thinking urban planning departments in the world, is world-renowned. What is the fate of such an entity?

The city of Toronto urban planning department right now is involved in very progressive initiatives such as the King-Spadina economic rejuvenation project. It's a mouthful, but it has to do with urban revitalization. The same type of project is being done on Dundas West. Under the plans of amalgamation, it sounds to me as though it's a measure in cost-cutting, obviously, and it's a measure in eliminating different services that seem to be redundant, but I don't think in any way can the different municipal urban planning departments be seen as redundant. They each serve a very specific and important function, and I hope in this whole process of amalgamation you do not forget the important function that they serve.

It's really scary when you think what would happen to areas such as the whole Dundas West area if this econ-

omic rejuvenation project had not been started. It's still in the process of working up to the level that the city of Toronto planning department would like to see it run at, and it needs direct supervision from people at the planning department. You cannot eliminate planners and the staff that they work with to have this sort of direct consultation. Without that, you will see an urban decay, a spiral, bringing us to the level of many American inner cities. There's a reason why the city of Toronto works. Don't forget this when you look into this whole amalgamation. Do not forget about the urban planning departments. They do serve such a vital role. I can only emphasize this so many times, in studying all the different rejuvenation projects. Those are just two that I'm citing right now. It's just amazing the kinds of work they've been able to do and the type of business and economic growth they've been able to spur within the city of Toronto.

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That's another thing. This issue of amalgamating the municipalities within Metro doesn't seem to address the core problem that the GTA/Metro is facing, especially the city of Toronto, and that is the exodus of business from 416 to 905. This is coming from someone who actually benefits somewhat in the short term from this. I'm a resident of 905. I live in Thornhill. But once again, in studying this whole issue of amalgamation, I've seen that the short-term savings do not in any way justify what's going to happen in the long term.

It's not fair for people like myself, who live in the suburbs, to enjoy all the amenities that Toronto has to offer and then run back into the 'burbs, being too afraid to stay here. It's not like that now. If we move very carefully in this area and do enough studying and really look into what we're doing and don't just try and ram this legislation through, maybe we can avert this. But I think the most important thing is to address these problems of business from 416 to 905 so that we do not have a loss in the tax base in the city of Toronto, within Metro, that will aid this urban decay. Maybe that's the next step in what you're going to do; I don't know. But please don't forget about that. That's the core issue here.

It's been mentioned I'm sure many times before and even in the last presentation, and this is something I haven't had enough of a chance to get fully into, but this is what I'm going to be looking into in the next couple of weeks: amalgamations that have occurred in other cities. I know in Halifax, for example, civic officials there are very unhappy with what's happened with amalgamation. The savings that they thought they were going to see, they saw in the first couple of years, but once again it's moving from this idea of short-term fiscal year-to-year savings and what happened in the bigger, broader picture, and they're not happy. They haven't seen the savings and they've seen more problems. So keep this in mind. That's it.

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** Thank you very much. You mentioned Halifax. How long have they been amalgamated now?

**Mr Kandankery:** I believe for six years.

**Mr Parker:** You made a number of points. You focused at some length —

**Mr Kandankery:** One second. In regards to Halifax, or any of the other amalgamations, as I stated before, I've just roughly looked into that. I'm going to be looking into that. I just heard about it and I just heard about some of the reports from civic officials, so I can't give you specifics on any of the other amalgamations.

**Mr Parker:** That's fine, thanks. Actually, I'm moving on from that. You commented on planning matters at some length and I wanted to just touch on that. I haven't heard anything in the Bill 103 proposal that would eliminate planning departments, but it's a matter of amalgamating the planning departments and making them leaner. What in that process puts good planning and good planning principles at risk?

**Mr Kandankery:** Because they'll be working with reduced staff, and they need the staff they have right now. They need the full staff if they're going to have the direct kind of consultations that they've been having with the different business groups, with the different neighbourhood groups, the different people in the communities where they're working. They need the full staff that they have, and this is one area where if you think you can save a couple of thousand dollars by cutting here and there, it's going to cost you millions in the long term.

**Mr Parker:** I've heard a number of people suggest that we have overlap in planning in this city right now with local planning and planning at the Metro level and that we don't need those two levels, that we are duplicating efforts and not adding any productive value. Any comments on that?

**Mr Kandankery:** Yes. The Metro level works at the Metro level. They don't have the resources or an understanding of the dynamics of neighbourhood planning per se as well as the different municipal planning departments do. They're working in direct consultation with people in those neighbourhoods. They have the staff to do that. The Metro planning department does not have the staff to be able to talk on an ongoing basis with the different business leaders, with the different community leaders, and to find out what the real core problems are and ways of addressing those problems and doing it on an ongoing basis. They need the staff; they need the people. If you don't have the people, you can't do work like that.

**Mr Parker:** We're not talking about how many people we'll wind up with in the end, but we're looking at —

**Mr Kandankery:** But you're talking about eliminating urban planning staff and streamlining it and trying to make it more effective. I'm saying that if you think you can cut costs in this area, you're wrong, because it's going to cost the city, the taxpayers, millions of dollars in the end.

**Mr Parker:** I haven't heard anything about eliminating vast numbers —

**Mr Kandankery:** I hope you're right.

**Mr Parker:** — but I have heard about eliminating a layer, eliminating duplication. Let's just say for the moment that all the planning staff are put into one department for the whole city. Any reason why that couldn't be subdivided and sections of the planning staff zero in on the planning issues and planning priorities of particular neighbourhoods, similar to what we have now with separate planning staffs in separate municipalities?

**Mr Kandankery:** If you keep the numbers, sure. If you keep the staff there.

**Mr Parker:** Do we need all the staff we have now, when you total up all the local planning staff plus the entire Metro planning staff? Do we need all of those people?

**Mr Kandankery:** Yes, because Metro planning staff works at a different level. They're looking at a cohesive plan for the entire Metro region. Their function is completely different.

**Mr Parker:** If amalgamation kept all of the planners and all of the planning staff that are currently employed but put them into a single organization, would you support that?

**Mr Kandankery:** Can you repeat that?

**Mr Parker:** There's nothing in Bill 103 that fires a single planner. All it does is consolidate or give potential for consolidating the planning departments.

**Mr Kandankery:** That's why I'm here today, to make sure —

**Mr Parker:** If the planning departments were consolidated but everyone kept their jobs, would you support that?

**Mr Kandankery:** If the staff was kept, I could support that, but I just hope that's going to happen.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Kandankery, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### FRANK FAUBERT

**The Chair:** Would Frank Faubert please come forward. Good morning, Your Worship. Welcome to the committee. You have half an hour this morning to make a presentation. If there's time left at the end, I'll divide it equally among the three caucuses for question-and-answer.

**Mr Frank Faubert:** I have a lot to say, but what I'll try to do is leave some time in the end because I wouldn't miss the questions for the world.

Good morning, Mr Chairman, members of the committee, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of my colleagues on Scarborough council and the residents of the city of Scarborough, I'm indeed pleased to have this opportunity to appear before the committee this morning to outline Scarborough's position on Bill 103 and to present our position in opposition to forced amalgamation as proposed by Bill 103.

Before I begin my remarks, however, I wish to make something very clear. The city of Scarborough recognizes the need for change and has never proposed a position in support of the status quo. That said, we are fundamentally opposed to the direction in which this government is headed, the speed at which they're attempting to get there, their almost contemptuous dismissal of all those who would disagree with them, and the methods they are using to implement this legislation.

Because others have addressed and will address the issues of neighbourhoods, community identity and personal considerations, I intend in my time allotted to touch on some history, governance, and a critique of the bill itself.

First let's look at history. George Santayana said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to

repeat it." Never has this been more true than in the context of the discussion of Bill 103. I come before you today representing a municipality that was first surveyed in 1791, named by John Graves Simcoe in 1796, and incorporated as a township in 1850 under the Baldwin Act. In other words, the historical underpinnings of the present-day city of Scarborough predate Confederation, predate the BNA Act, and in fact predate the province of Ontario. I think that's important to have as a matter of record.

I mention this to emphasize that I'm not only appearing today on behalf of the council and residents of the city of Scarborough, but on behalf of the history and past people and governments of the city of Scarborough. These are the people who built this city across the years with their sweat and with their taxes.

**0950**

There is also a history to the rejection of amalgamation as a governance option for Metropolitan Toronto that goes back to 1953, when the Ontario Municipal Board released the Cummings report and its findings, which rejected amalgamation for many of the same reasons that are as valid today as they were then.

In his rejection of amalgamation, Mr Cummings, who would later become Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, noted, "It would result in immediate and prolonged administrative confusion of the most serious kind...taxes would rise...it is unrealistic" and is "contrary to the spirit of local democracy." He went on in his rationale for rejecting amalgamation to say, "The practical and technical advantages of complete amalgamation...are comparable with similar advantages in a completely centralized totalitarian form of national government" — chilling words indeed.

The Goldenberg commission of 1965, the Robarts commission of 1977 and the more recent examples of the Trimmer report, the Golden Task Force on the Future of the Greater Toronto Area, the Birnbaum review and the Crombie Who Does What panel all recommended against total amalgamation of local municipalities.

Three of these reports were directly commissioned by the current Premier and this government, and the minister himself was a member of the Trimmer task force prior to his election to the Legislature and current appointment as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Despite this and the recommendations against amalgamation contained in them and every other report in recent memory, they have been summarily dismissed with no further justification by the minister and this government.

The debate on Bill 103, and I use the word "debate" advisedly because in fact there was no public debate on amalgamation prior to the floating of a trial balloon by the minister and the introduction of legislation on December 17 last — little real debate has taken place since that time. It has occurred largely in a vacuum because the government has essentially refused to debate the issue, preferring instead to declare, despite the complete absence of fact, that it is right. They have no report, no study, no body of evidence for amalgamation to support their proposal. They claim a business base and yet have no business case to support that claim.

The government has commended itself for taking action that "others before failed to take." I would suggest

that before they continue patting themselves on the back they understand that past governments did not attempt to amalgamate Metro Toronto because they had read the studies, they understood the conclusions and they learned from history. They recognized that amalgamation was not a reasonable option and that the total body of evidence pointed to the fact that it is fundamentally the wrong thing to do. Golden said that, Robarts said that, Goldenberg said that and Cummings said that.

When one views the current government's actions in this matter and its insistence on forging ahead with this ill-conceived, badly flawed and incompletely drafted piece of legislation in the face of all evidence to the contrary, you have to ask yourself: Why? I would suggest everyone keep asking that.

For the record, we object to the following clauses of Bill 103. I am resisting the urge to dissect this bill clause by clause, simply because that would then indicate an acceptance of the remainder of the bill, when in fact I reject and our council rejects the basic proposition of this legislation, that of forced amalgamation.

However, for the record, what I find particularly odious are sections 9 through 15, the imposition of the board of trustees by this legislation in the absence of any evidence of malfeasance, and with the provisions for limiting the duly elected councils from carrying out the financial management of their respective municipalities. The need for this draconian provision has never been established and indeed the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing already has the ministerial authority to act if there is any claim or evidence of financial impropriety by any municipality in Ontario. You have to question why that's even in the bill. So I would recommend that clauses 9 through 15 and all its subsections be struck from the bill.

As well, I agree with the position of the Metro council regarding the transition team and its recommendations regarding sections 16 through 21.

I would point out that there is a complete absence of fact to support the government's position that amalgamation of local municipalities will promote effective and economically efficient government. In his 1977 report, former Ontario Premier John Robarts paid special attention to the theory that amalgamation would save money and concluded that the argument held no water. He stated, "Since there are no strong arguments for administrative savings to be realized from such a move, the commission has decided to discard the amalgamation option." I would suggest those are wise words indeed.

Where is Premier Harris in this debate? When he was Conservative leader, in a speech in Fergus in 1994, he said: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and our pride? I disagree with restructuring" — this is still the Premier, remember — "because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities." Can things really have changed that much in two and a half years?

What this government and the Premier want is effective and economically sound local government. That's what they state. I suggest to you that what they seek already exists.

I would like to read you a quote which appeared in the Scarborough Mirror on October 17, 1994:

"Scarborough's fiscal efficiency is a model that should be followed by other levels of government.... Scarborough's budgeting practices of the last four years are an example of the way government budgeting should be done." I am gratified that Premier Mike Harris, then Conservative leader, recognized the hard work and dedication by the government of Scarborough in his glowing recommendation then, but I must also wonder what has changed in the interim. Have we suddenly become incompetent? Or is the government, in its interests in "crass political gain" — by the way, it's a phrase the Premier recently used for effect in connection with a federal issue in his own riding — telling the city of Scarborough and other municipalities in Metropolitan Toronto that the Premier's favourable opinion of Scarborough is wrong now?

For the record, Scarborough has had a zero tax increase for five of the last six years. That's over a period when our population has increased by 5%, when taxpayers have won appeals to their assessment, eroding the base even further, and the provincial government grants were reduced by \$55 million over a period when inflation increased by 11%. We held taxes to a zero increase while paying down our capital debt, which leaves us virtually debt free, a fact the minister's parliamentary assistant might want to acquaint himself with since just last week he suggested in this venue that Scarborough was in debt. I will expect a question on that, Mr Gilchrist.

At the same time, we reduced staff and restructured our workforce and administration, prompting Toronto Life magazine to recognize Scarborough as the city that provides its taxpayers with the most effective level of service and the fewest number of staff at the lowest cost per capita in Metro. This fact was also recognized by the province's own auditors, who said, "The lowest-cost service provider on a per capita and per household base in Metro is Scarborough."

And one thing I want to get on the public record: My Metro colleague Chairman Alan Tonks, who appeared before this committee, like many in support of amalgamation told you that Metro is already 72% amalgamated, so why not get on and finish the job? This position has already been repeated subsequently by many editorialists and provincial ministers in their defence of the amalgamation theory. However, this does not hold up to scrutiny. Metro does not deliver 72% of the services, as this claim is purported to indicate. The fact is Metro spends 72% of the municipal dollars that are expended in Metro, and since 68% of this is spent on only three services — policing, social services and transit, two of which, police and transit, are not administered by Metro but are independent commissions or boards — then almost half the services delivered in Metro come from the local municipalities.

I must also speak to the question of onus, to the issue of on whom rests the burden of proof in a democratic society. This committee and the House to which you report should need no reminder that in a democratic society the burden of proof to prove the merits of profound change rests solely and exclusively on he who is

proposing it. But here in the province of Ontario, with a Premier who before the election stated he would abolish regions and strengthen local governments, and a minister who before his election actually signed a report recommending the elimination of Metro "as the cornerstone of the governance reform process" and stating "the present number of local governments will be retained," on what basis does the Premier and the minister now reverse themselves?

It is also a fact that one of the most compelling reasons for the growing public unrest around this legislation relates directly to the inability of the government to provide any of us with any evidence to support their case. Whether you disagree or agree with their actions, I firmly believe the public is entitled to know what the facts are, and it is the responsibility of the government proposing such legislation to make its data available to support its own case.

They have not and cannot, because they have no facts, they have no data and they have no business case or study to support their claims, with the sole exception of a hastily composed and totally discredited KPMG study. Its authors subsequently admitted that the study does not guarantee that the merger will produce any savings and that there has been no amalgamation elsewhere that would demonstrate the certainty of savings in Metropolitan Toronto and that costs could actually rise under amalgamation.

#### 1000

I, for one, both resent and reject the attempt to marginalize legitimate concern as self-interest, a common defence of this government. I have been elected to speak out in the interests of my neighbourhoods, my communities and my city, not roll over while this government rushes the enactment of legislation which has the potential to damage our future both as a municipality and a region, and I'll make no apologies for that.

But putting that aside, I would challenge the government to present their facts, to make their case in clearly stated and supportable terms. Since last fall, when the minister floated his "gut feeling" theory and then dropped Bill 103, he has repeatedly suggested that local mayors, and by association their councils, have failed to present him with viable alternatives. He further suggested that local politicians only became involved once he tabled the legislation and they realized that their jobs were threatened.

This cynical response conveniently ignores the fact that until he actually tabled the bill, local councils had little from the government to respond to. They were instead forced to deal with a daily dose of trial balloons, unsubstantiated rumours, vague suggestions from the minister floating from press scrums, innuendo and policy through press release, sometimes contradicted within days by yet another press statement or new rumour offered by sound bite. Is this how the issue of governance and democratic institutional reform is to be decided?

Since the government has repeatedly insisted on quoting from the document known as the Common Sense Revolution, let me do likewise. On page 17 it clearly states: "We will sit down with municipalities to discuss ways of reducing government entanglement and bureau-

cacy, with an eye to eliminating waste and duplication, as well as unfair downloading by the province." Where is that consultation, so glibly promised? I'll deal with the latter portion of that statement in a moment.

The province's stated objective is to supposedly create efficient local government and effective delivery of services, but the mayors' offer to discuss how minimum benchmarking and service standards could be established in cooperation with the province to achieve this efficiency was rejected out of hand by the minister in meeting the mayors for the first and last time last fall.

The minister has repeatedly stated he has not received any viable alternatives from anyone. It would be more accurate to suggest that what the minister really means is he has not received any alternatives that he has bothered to listen to.

We have a statement here, and this is for the record, but aside from this I want to point out that we have made submissions to all the task forces, the panels that have been involved with the governance of Metropolitan Toronto and that we have made them long before the issue of amalgamation was floated.

The mayors' report, which was made in response following the proposal for amalgamation, outlined alternatives and suggestions to amalgamation. The total report was quickly rejected out of hand and characterized as proposals from self-serving politicians intent on saving their jobs and maintaining the status quo.

It sought to answer the question, where do we go from here?, and included proposals to downsize local councils, to achieve cost savings without amalgamation and the establishment of service boards which would replace the Metro function and link with the future service boards across the GTA, something Crombie subsequently recommended later in December. Some status quo.

Whether or not you agree with the recommendations contained in these and countless other proposals that have been submitted to the government for consideration, it is clear that a number of options have been presented and the government's claim that no one came forward with alternatives before the introduction of bill is simply not fact. By the way, put aside all the local politicians in this matter. There is a huge number of experts in this field who also point out that the amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto is seriously wrong. Andrew Sancton of the University of Western Ontario and Wendell Cox, a policy and legislative consultant from the United States, have written extensively on the issue, and on top of it there are informed and compelling comments and analysis from many newspaper columnists.

Despite all these and other examples of how difficult, complex, and often unworkable amalgamation can be, this government would have us believe, without any supporting data, that they can provide for the merger of seven governments, representing over 2.3 million people, involving 44,000 employees, dozens of collective agreements and over 100,000 bylaws, and do so within a time frame that can be shown as impossible to meet by municipalities only a tenth the size of the proposed new city. At the same time, this is the most complex merger of public corporations ever undertaken in this country, and it will be coupled with a multimillion-dollar downloading of

new responsibilities and costs from the province and a comprehensive rewrite of the Municipal Act.

And to what end? The creation of an enormous institution that will take years to sort itself out and will be far more complex, sluggish and insensitive than anything we presently have and will cost more and require more, not less, layers of management than currently exist. This is not smaller, more efficient government; it is clearly larger government. And it is not local government.

Early on, it was clear that the introduction of Bill 103 was only the first phase of the government's total restructuring of local government and the urban landscape. Phase two came in the guise of "mega-week," a period in which the government undermined their promise in the Common Sense Revolution to "eliminate unfair downloading by the province," and dumped billions of dollars of costs for both hard and soft services on the municipal taxpayers. They did so contrary to their own Who Does What panel's recommendations, the panel that was established to study and report on which level of government best delivered entangled or shared-cost services most efficiently.

The net effect of their actions is not disentanglement, but rather disengagement and re-entanglement. For a government committed to the elimination of duplication and overlap, this is strange policy indeed.

Perhaps the most chilling response to the government's actions has come from the financial community and the business community. Both Moody's Canada and the Canadian Bond Rating Service have suggested that the impact of these reforms on the municipal sector could have the potential to affect the financial and debt profiles of the municipalities concerned. They also noted that municipalities might be forced to draw upon reserves, compromising financial flexibility, or make significant upward adjustments to property taxes. That means raising taxes, gentlemen. Just last week a senior economist at the CIBC also warned that downloading on local municipalities, particularly Metro Toronto, could force them into serious budgetary shortfalls.

Along with its communities and efficiencies of service delivery, Scarborough is proud of its relationship with its business community and has worked hard to retain business and attract new companies to our city. Our economic development division of the mayor's office has achieved a 7.6% increase in realty and business assessment across our non-residential assessment base. In 1995, we had the first annual increase since 1989-90.

Scarborough led all Metro municipalities in 1995 with 2.4% economic growth, and in 1996 with a 1.9% increase in employment growth — that's 6,300 jobs — a 4.7% reduction in vacant industrial space, and a 3.4% increase in new business. We are the only municipality that can show those figures. We have listened to the business community, worked hard to streamline the planning process, and offered incentives to attract and keep existing businesses that otherwise would have located outside of Metropolitan Toronto.

If the government insists on moving forward with its downloading proposals, this could result in undermining the stability of our economic development base, giving added reasons to accelerate the flight of industry to

outside of Metro Toronto. We have already seen major offshore investors postpone planned development in the face of future uncertainties in taxation and governance. Amalgamation also threatens the recently established GTA economic development marketing alliance. This is recognized by the mayors both inside Metro and outside the GTA.

Mr Chairman, I have been directed by Scarborough council to clarify their position and put it on the record. The administrative committee of Scarborough council reaffirmed a set of principles of governance for the Metro area which will be before the full council tomorrow. These principles, which they feel could serve as a transition to the year 2000, are as follows:

First, they recommend the use of the new federal-provincial boundaries for the election of local councils in the fall of 1997. This would achieve the government's goal of reducing the number of local politicians from 106 to 48, a decrease of 45%, far greater than the 24% reduction of provincial politicians recently introduced by the government.

Second is the retention for one more term of Metro council, but with the 48 members elected locally serving both levels. The council would form the basis for the transition and the move to a GTA-wide service board by the elections of the next term in the year 2000.

Third, and again I must emphasize that this is a Scarborough standing committee recommendation, is the amalgamation of the city of York, and the borough of East York, into the city of Toronto, or Toronto and North York, and the retention of four strong municipal governments in Metro as provided for in the Crombie report.

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The objective is to provide for the phasing in of changes or to allow for any further changes to governance structure, to allow for the considered phasing in of Metro to a GTA service boards system, and to allow for discussion and negotiation of the disentanglement recommendations contained in the Crombie report.

In closing, Mr Chairman, over the last 26 years I have had the privilege to represent the people of Scarborough as an alderman, a city councillor, a Metro councillor, a member of this Legislature, and currently as the mayor of the city of Scarborough. In all that time, I can honestly say I cannot remember a piece of legislation being undertaken by a government that has involved such a mean-spirited attack on the bill's opponents while at the same time offering the protesting public absolutely no facts to back up the government's decisions for the introduction of the bill. This government's actions not only demonstrate a contempt for local politicians, but contempt for the people of Metro Toronto and, worse still, contempt for the democratic process.

I have never seen a minister of the crown so blatantly impugn people's character, reputation, morals and actions. For a government and a minister to flip-flop on the issue of referenda and then suggest that municipalities would blatantly rig the process is unheard of, but then again, this is a government that prides itself on breaking new ground.

Do I sound angry? You bet I am. But I am also more than a little sad. I am sad for the people of the city of

Scarborough, indeed for people all across Metro Toronto, and apprehensive of what the future holds in store for them. Because of what I hear from my constituents, and because of what I see as my responsibility to represent and speak for them, I intend to see that we use every legal and political means available to us to challenge this government on this legislation.

My closing message to the committee and the government is this: Give us the facts, give us the figures, and listen to the people, the taxpayers of Scarborough and the other local municipalities, the very people you profess to represent also, the people who in the end pay the freight for all levels of government.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Faubert. Unfortunately, we only have about two minutes per caucus, starting with the Liberal caucus.

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** Thank you, Mr Mayor. As you know, the then leader of the opposition, Mike Harris, went to Scarborough, and let me quote from the Scarborough Mirror: "Scarborough's fiscal efficiency is a model that should be followed by other levels of government," provincial Tory leader Mike Harris says." He praised Scarborough for freezing its portion, about 20%, of the property tax bill for three of the last four years.

I wonder — because the parliamentary assistant to the minister was here bemoaning the fact that Scarborough's finances are being mismanaged, you're in debt — what's happened in the last couple of years from when the then leader of the opposition was saying all governments should model themselves after Scarborough to now, when they're saying that Scarborough is on the verge of financial disaster here and that's why they have to amalgamate you?

**Mr Faubert:** First of all, I would point out to you that Scarborough is not in debt, that we're a model of financial management. I'd also like to bring to the attention of the Chairman of this committee the Legislative Assembly Act, section 45.1 regarding privilege, "breach," as defined in subsection (6): "giving false evidence and prevaricating before the assembly or a committee thereof" — I would remind you to listen to those words very carefully — "constitutes a breach of privilege and contempt of the Legislative Assembly." Anyone who is making statements like that is in breach of your standing orders and the Legislative Assembly Act.

I would suggest that is simply not true. Neither is true the statement — and I'm glad you asked that question, because on February 10, the same member indicated that last spring every mayor from the GTA, including the mayor from Toronto, was invited down here, and that those mayors knew full well what the end-game was. That's not true. I was never invited and I never attended such a meeting. I'd like to put that on the record too.

The city of Scarborough, first of all, is virtually debt-free, and in the end the statement by the parliamentary assistant, the member for Scarborough East, is patently untrue.

**Mr Colle:** On a point of order: I'm wondering if the Chair could look into that violation of the privileges of the members of this committee as a result of the reference the mayor made to the committee being misled by false information.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** On a point of privilege, Mr Chair: I am getting sick and tired of Mr Colle misquoting, badgering witnesses, badgering members of the government. I never said —

**The Chair:** That's not a point of privilege.

**Mr Gilchrist:** This is a point of privilege. Mr Colle has suggested that I have said things on the record. Mr Colle knows that is not true, and I would suggest to Mr Colle, if he wants to get a copy of Hansard, read it again and bring it back to this committee, then perhaps he could raise something.

**Mr Faubert:** I have a copy of Hansard.

**Mr Gilchrist:** But the fact of the matter is I said none of those things that you have suggested to the mayor. I reject that and I reject your continued assault on the integrity of this committee.

**Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights):** Point of order, Mr Chairman.

**Mr Faubert:** I would suggest that I have a copy of Hansard and I could read it for the record.

**The Chair:** Mr Kwinter has the floor. Excuse me, Mayor Faubert.

**Mr Kwinter:** I've been listening to this latest interchange, and the suggestion that Mr Colle is badgering the witness is absurd.

**The Chair:** Which isn't a point of order, though.

**Mr Kwinter:** The point of order is that we have a witness who has claimed that these statements are untrue. He has a copy of Hansard with him. I think it's a very simple matter for the Chairman to look into it and make a determination. I don't think it serves anybody to have the parliamentary assistant trying to rewrite what has gone on.

**The Chair:** Thank you. I'll undertake to look into the situation if Mr Marchese would go forward with his two minutes, please.

**Mr Marchese:** Thank you, Mr Faubert, for your presentation, and I want to thank you for the quote that you provided about what Mr Harris had said prior to the election on the whole issue of amalgamation. "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and our pride?" said he. "I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities."

It's interesting because he knew there were no facts to the contrary. In fact, all the evidence speaks in support of what he had said then.

**Mr Faubert:** That's right.

**Mr Marchese:** Quite clearly he's taken an interesting U-turn. It's quite an illegal U-turn, I would say.

I want to ask you two quick things: On the issue of free votes — because my sense is that Mike Harris is going to drive all the boys back into the fold on this matter — do you think a free vote might help some of the members to take an independent position from Mike Harris on this?

**Mr Faubert:** The great problem with our parliamentary system is that free votes are really not free votes. I think if anyone has any future ambition within the government, which is not truly a parliamentary system but indeed is an executive system — only the parliamen-

tary system of England is a true parliamentary system, and indeed that's where legislation must be approved by the caucus prior to it even being introduced. That doesn't exist in Canadian parliamentary law. I think it would be interesting to have a free vote, but I'd suggest every member of the government who has future ambitions would simply fall victim to the process.

**Mr Marchese:** I appreciate that. On the whole issue of referenda, they passed Bill 86. There are some elements that were okay in that particular bill and some that were difficult, but on the whole issue of referenda, Bill 86 permits municipalities in between elections, at any time, to have a referendum. It permits phone balloting, it permits —

**Mr Faubert:** Mail balloting.

**Mr Marchese:** — mail, and Internet voting as well. So I'm assuming that it's quite consistent, what all of you are doing, with that bill, and I'm not quite understanding how the government is pretending to get around their own particular bill. Do you have any further comments on this? Because it worries me in terms of their position.

**Mr Faubert:** What worries me is the position taken in opposition or an attempt to undermine the referendum by virtually sabotaging it, by telling people they shouldn't vote in it because it's not going to mean anything, and by attacking the methods and the variety of methods that the individual municipalities have selected within their own budgets, and, I should say, many of them within the provisions of Bill 86, and to simply experiment with different voting methods. I think the government should be delighted that the municipalities are showing initiative. Indeed, that's one genius of municipal government, that it can individually find different ways of reaching the same solution.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mayor Faubert. Mr Gilchrist.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Mayor. Just to put on the record, Scarborough's financial information return for 1995 says \$3.992 million in debt. That was in fact the number I quoted.

**Mr Faubert:** The which?

**Mr Gilchrist:** The 1995 financial information return from the city of Scarborough shows \$3.992 million in debt.

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**Mr Faubert:** In 1995, yes. This is 1997.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you. That's the number I quoted — those are the last figures the province has access to — and I quoted it to contrast that the city of Toronto was \$498 million in debt. I think if you look further in Hansard, you will see that my comments were directed to the point, "Why shouldn't all of the citizens of Metro Toronto have enjoyed the financial successes here in Scarborough?" I just wanted you to know that I had complimented the city of Scarborough to use it as the model to contrast the other cities.

Mayor, you will recall the Change for the Better report. Do you still subscribe to what you put in there?

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Chair, what is the point of this intervention? How are you ruling on this matter?

**The Chair:** He has two minutes to make comments, just as everybody else has. Go ahead, Mr Gilchrist.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Mayor, do you still subscribe by what you signed your name to back in November?

**Mr Faubert:** I subscribe to certain principles within that, and flowing from that at a discussion with the minister we made particular offers to the minister to deal with such things as benchmarking and standardizing delivery of service.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I want to deal very quickly with principles because we've only got a few seconds. One of the principles you said in this report was equity. Right now, how does Scarborough benefit by being part of the Metro system of government? How many dollars do Scarborough taxpayers get extra, if I can phrase it that way, in terms of the pooling that comes into Scarborough by being part of Metro?

**Mr Faubert:** We only benefit through the pooling of education taxes.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Yes. How many dollars was it?

**Mr Faubert:** It's \$168 million, but that is done clearly on the formula that's established for funding of education. It's a ratio of residential to industrial assessment.

**The Chair:** Mr Newman, you have about 10 seconds.

**Mr Faubert:** It's a basic principle of taxation within a particular area.

**Mr Gilchrist:** All right, I'm going to pass to Mr Newman.

**Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre):** I have a question for the mayor. I just want to begin by thanking you for coming down today and making your presentation. It has to do with the ballot. Many of my constituents, who are many of your constituents, have a great deal of concern and reservation about participating in the process because their signature and address are required and they feel that there's no privacy. They ask the question, what happens to these ballots when they're finished?

**The Chair:** Mr Newman, I'm sorry —

**Mr Newman:** I just want to finish, Chair, by saying that the ad in the Scarborough Mirror it states that anyone 18 years of age or older is eligible to vote. Must they be a Scarborough resident? Must they be a Canadian resident? How are we able to determine that? Given the fact that some people are calling it a referendum, some a plebiscite, some an opinion poll, some a referendum poll, or the city calling it a survey vote on the card —

**The Chair:** Mr Newman, I'm sorry to interrupt. We're well beyond the time.

**Mr Newman:** — can the results be considered as a legitimate measure of support in Scarborough if the system is flawed the way it is?

**The Chair:** Is there consent on both sides? Mr Marchese.

**Mr Marchese:** Yes, please.

**Mr Faubert:** Quickly, yes, they sign it. If they wish that it be confidential, they can use it to go to any recreation centre or library or the civic centre itself and actually put it in a ballot box. Those are destroyed immediately. That is a verification that the person does conform to the qualifications that you indicated earlier, because they're checked then against the voters' list. That is the validity of the person who is voting. Those are destroyed immediately, there's no list taken of them or kept of them, and many people, once that is explained to them, understand that that's the system by which they're checked against the voters' list.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Faubert, for coming forward to make your presentation to the committee this afternoon.

### IVOR VAVASOUR

**The Chair:** Would Ivor Vavasour please come forward. Welcome, sir, to the committee.

**Mr Ivor Vavasour:** My presentation will be quite brief. I'm unequivocally in favour of the GTA, as it's known, for two fairly obvious reason. The economics are undeniable in that there will be a great saving of expenses, whether or not the savings will, shall we say, go back into the coffers. If not, they could be used in other areas that perhaps may need greater financing. Any time a change is made or something is instituted or constituted that will benefit the citizens of the community, then go for it. Perhaps economics are not the most important element in that situation, but in this instance I think the economics will be served extremely well and I believe the citizens will be served even more so than they are at the present time.

I've heard a lot of dissension, if you like, from various detractors of this plan, and it takes me back to 1953, when Fred Gardiner brought on something that we now know as Metropolitan Toronto. I believe it's worked quite well to this point in time. But one thought comes to my mind: The motivation of the detractors at that time appears to have advanced forward to the detractors of today, so really while everything changes, not a great deal does change, particularly in the political world.

Having said that, I recall just after the announcement was made, I think within a matter of a day or two, a couple of our eminent elected officials readily climbed into the fray and said, "We're prepared to cut our costs and expenses by 30%." My question to that is, what took them so long? Why did they have to be waked up by some affirmative action, which we have seen in the concept of GTA?

Again, I think it's a wonderful thing. I would only suggest that in implementing the financial structures involved in this new concept that perhaps a little professional help, other than from elected officials and certainly from public bureaucrats, be invited to make a contribution, because I really feel that professional people such as accountants, financial advisors and so on look at things in a different light than perhaps those who have to implement the program to hand and I think there should be some outside advice sought.

I'm sure it will work. I don't think I can add anything more to that.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, sir. We have a few minutes for questions from Mr Kwinter.

**Mr Kwinter:** Thank you, Mr Vavasour. In your opening statement you said something that is really at the hub of the whole debate, and that is you said there's no question that there will be great savings as a result of this amalgamation. The problem is that we haven't found anybody, even KPMG, who has said without question these will happen. What they're saying is they could happen, they may happen. There are others who are saying it's not going to happen, it's going to cost a lot

more. My question to you is, what information do you have that gives you the comfort to be able to say that, without question, there are going to be savings as a result of this amalgamation?

**Mr Vavasour:** I have far less information than any of you folks here, but I do know on the basis of reason and logic and mathematics that when you eliminate a cost, whether it's an individual or a board or a committee, and still maintain a degree of efficiency and service, you've saved money. It's obvious.

I don't believe that at this point in time there is anyone who can unequivocally say there will be a greater cost or a greater financial benefit. With so many elements two and three years down the road, no one can possibly perceive whether it's going to be financially disastrous or financially favourable. But based on reason and logic, as I say, if you eliminate one cost from a production, you've saved money.

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**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** One quick question, sir: It has been mentioned many times in here about Fortune magazine, that we are the best nation and the best city in the world to live in. Why is that? Is it one specific thing or more things?

**Mr Vavasour:** I would say it is because of the nature of the Canadian people. It has nothing whatsoever to do with its various governments. While our governments strive for what we know as fair play and democracy — I think all our governments do that, whether it's provincial, municipal, federal or whatever — Canadians are known as a very fair and honest people. In the Second World War, I had the privilege of working with Americans, Greeks, Poles, Italians, South Africans and many others, and our reputation then as Canadians was impeccable.

**Mr Sergio:** Our social system — schools, health care, various programs, stuff like that — has nothing to do with it?

**Mr Vavasour:** I wouldn't say they had nothing to do with it, but they are simply parts of a mosaic, if you like. People look at our school system and say it's very good. Then again, if they were to look at the school system that used to be in Newfoundland, the parochial system, that wasn't so good. There are many parts of our society which are above and beyond other parts of the world, but we have our weaknesses.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Vavasour, for making your presentation today.

### GEORGE SLOAN

**The Chair:** Would George Sloan please come forward. Good morning, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr George Sloan:** Thank you, Mr Chairman, and thank you all for not leaving the room. One of my nightmares, as I'm sure it is for all of us, is being the one who cleared the room, so thanks for staying.

My name, as the Chairman said, is George Cameron Sloan. I live in the Beach. My wife and I both spent some time wondering why the heck I would possibly come down here, and it really wasn't clear to me, as I sat last night thinking about what I wanted to say, just why. I finally appreciated that I'm here because I still believe.

My family settled here in 1810 and has since then acted on its central belief that it is our individual duty to be productive and useful citizens, happy and healthy in private, and active in public service. We have variously served as reeves, mayors, trustees, one as the treasurer of this House, as volunteers in hundreds of initiatives, and in the military. We have built and helped build town and city halls, community centres, schools and churches. I've tried to honour those who went before by doing my bit, in helping to provide housing for seniors and ex-psychiatric patients, by helping to prevent crime, and in volunteer work in youth sports, the community and charitable institutions. I do it because I believe my ancestors were right, that there is no better place to invest in the future than here, in our Ontario.

I believe that we, all of us, Ontarians, are a remarkable people. Nowhere else on this planet is the balance between individual freedoms and public responsibility more perfect.

In my family I'm the Tory, my brother is a Liberal and my father is a union leader. In Ontario, that means only that we disagree without being disagreeable. We share, no matter our party, a common goal, and that is to do our individual best to create, maintain and improve a culture in which no one is afraid or desperate or angry, but rather in which everyone is confident, purposeful and optimistic. We want what we think all rational people want, and that is to be part of something that only gets better.

I believe too that how we do things is often as important as what we do. I'd rather wait until my neighbour is ready to share in the building of a new mutual driveway than to force him to share in the costs or even to do it myself. Without him, I'm not building a mutually beneficial asset; I'm building resentment.

Bill 103, amalgamation, is the key issue around which pivot the other issues of actual value assessment, the redistribution of responsibilities for specific social supports from the province to the city and, in part, education reform. To speak only to amalgamation without acknowledging its related initiatives is like being asked to discuss community safety without mentioning the police or Neighbourhood Watch. The issues are related and only make sense together.

Wiser souls than I must already have asked you to accept the reality that for most Metropolitan Torontonians, were the issue simply amalgamation, with its inevitable AVA or equivalent, we would be content to accept it as long as the result was basically revenue-neutral, services stayed basically the same and there was to be no sudden negative impact on the quality of our neighbourhoods.

But the introduction into the mix of a redistribution of responsibility for social support is a red flag. The revenue-neutrality now seems unlikely. Some Ontarians, it seems, will benefit greatly and others will get hammered, and that's not neutral. The services and supports no longer look likely to be basically the same. Those of us with the least flexibility seem to have been pushed closer to the edge of an uncertain future. Now, fear and uncertainty, suspicion and resentment seem linked to what was once just a sensible step forward. I believe how we are doing this is not good for us and for those who will follow.

I have examples to illustrate what I will ultimately ask that you put before the minister for consideration. I was asked last week to compose a balanced article on the megacity debate for publication in local newspapers in the east end. In the course of my research, I referenced backgrounders from the province, the city of Toronto paper on Bill 103, local and Metro newspapers, flyers from opposition groups, the Toronto Works brochure, and I discussed it with my neighbours and with members of all three of the local parties.

The implications of some of what I read and heard were either disturbing or were, as my brother says about some of my less sound arguments, psychically dissonant. For instance, we live in a multicameral system in which this individual citizen can be taxed by more than one level of government. I have two points on this. First, I really do find it hard to believe that the province is wrong when it states that there are savings to be had in reducing the number of governments taxing me from five to three. On the other hand, I'm aware that when the feds download to the provinces and the province does the same to the municipalities, while the federal and provincial taxes may have been reduced, mine haven't been. When a magician pulls a loonie from my ear, I assure you that my real interest is not how he did it but whether I get my dollar back.

Democracy is said by some to be under attack. From my perspective, it isn't. I still get to vote. And I know that my councillor will or will not be available as a function of his or her character, not because of the burden of numbers. As a ratepayer and an activist, I know that an inaccessible politician is a defeated candidate in waiting.

One of my neighbours said, and it touched me: "I can save money by not eating. That doesn't mean it's sensible." I think she's right. This isn't just about saving money.

A few of us have found it odd that in this particular debate it is the champions of change who seem to be resisting change and it's the dinosaurs who seem to want change. It also seems odd to us that those who claim "United we stand" think we are better off staying divided.

While only tenuously related to this subject, the emasculation of full-time school trustees actually pleases me. In my crime prevention work, we quickly discovered that the trustees were the chief reason that principals and teachers, and therefore our kids, were working in an environment where education came second or third to political exigencies and job security. Before full-time trustees, teachers had as their primary objective to teach our children to love to learn, and failing that, how to learn. Now the primary objective is the political imperative to cover your butt.

#### 1040

I was actually just a little taken aback when I heard that North York's mayor is fretting about the possibility of garbage removal going from twice to once a week subsequent to amalgamation, because in our neighbourhood the average number of bags per week of garbage is one per household; maybe there's some recycling to be done in his constituency.

I hear too that there's some concern about neighbourhood identity disappearing. Again from my crime preven-

tion work, I can assure you that it is human nature to want to identify with some grouping, whether it's my co-op, my church, my party, my neighbourhood or my street gang. If the people who compose it are people of merit to me, I will want to be identified with them.

For me, as disturbed as I am by the anger and shouting, the invective and some of the exclusionary attitudes that have coloured some of this debate, there is an underlying assumption that I feel I must challenge, and to some extent both sides seem to have bought into it a little. I found it best illustrated in the East End Citizens for Democracy brochure wherein it is suggested in bold print that suburban councillors will not care about social issues.

The suggestion seems to be that anyone who lives east of Victoria Park, west of the Humber and north of the Toronto meander has no sense of social responsibility. I'm not obtuse. I can sense and see the threat to these social assets. But I remind both sides of the argument that while goodwill cannot be legislated, neither can it be removed from the people by an act of government. Yes, I see the threat, but I also see the prejudice from those who claim to want a world free of it, and it is not becoming. In all of this it is worth remembering that no government of the people can long stand immune from good ideas, reasonable concerns or the true character of the citizenry. To both sides, I implore you, do not underestimate the decency of Ontarians.

I would ask the minister therefore to take into account that although all of the initiatives are clearly consistent with the government's promise to eliminate waste and duplication, to find efficiencies and to increase accountability in government, and as delightful as it must be to some to see the left squirm, the people of Ontario, all of us, do care, will share, really don't think this is amusing and would now like some real assurances from the minister that no segment of the population and no neighbourhood or municipality will be diminished by amalgamation or its related acts.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Sloan, for your presentation. You've effectively used up your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this morning.

#### PEG LUSH

**The Chair:** Would Peg Lush please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Peg Lush:** Good morning to my fellow welfare recipients and to all of us who feed at the public trough, some more so than others. Members of this committee and the government as a whole are, I assume, 100% welfare recipients. The difference between the high and the low is that by the time you allocate the largest portion to yourselves and for your schemes, there is very little left for those at the bottom.

Now under Bill 103, with this downloading of welfare, you further disdain and dehumanize the children, women and men who are in need, not to mention us, the seniors, who have been relegated to some amorphous level of society, especially those seniors requiring long-term care. To add insult to injury, you now plan to steal that part of my tax money which is held in reserve and in trust for

me by the city of Toronto to preserve and protect my environment or even my life in an emergency situation.

I have a home, thanks to the generosity of my mother's cousin, a true humanitarian. In 1942 I made the purchase with a minuscule down payment and most lenient long-term arrangements, so that after years of the Depression and then the Second World War, my parents and their children would have a home. After 55 years of striving, I have no savings, no investments, but I do have my small pensions and I do have my home.

The one investment I do have is in that city of Toronto reserve fund, which is sacrosanct to me. Do not take it by fraudulent measures. That money was paid before your government covertly launched this nefarious scheme of high-level theft. If you think that I and thousands more like me will sit back with our hands folded and a smile pasted on our faces, you are mistaken.

I was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Canadian-born Canadian citizens. For almost seven years I lived with my parents and siblings in the state of Georgia, where my father had a thriving lumber business. He paid his workers, black and white, equal wages for work of equal value. One Friday several of dad's friends demanded, "Ross, you all will have to stop paying those niggers the same wages as the white folks or else there will be trouble." My father's answer: "In Canada, where I come from, we pay the same wages to everyone, as long as the work gets done." I wish that were true today. I suppose the friends might have donned their Ku Klux Klan whites and lynched him, but instead they took his business, railroaded him and his family, and we seemed to just disappear from that town forever.

The division in Georgia was, and I understand still is, on racial and colour grounds. I tie this in with the downloading of welfare, among other things, on to the cities. Here your discrimination is drawn on monetary lines: the haves and have-nots. The cities will have more destitute people, homeless, hungry, needing medical care; children living below the poverty line; there will be more deaths in the streets.

At least the Ku Klux Klan, although faceless, overtly leave their lynched victims hanging for all to see, while here the perpetrators of these heinous crimes against humanity also remain faceless but covertly active against the ever-increasing needy segment of society. Perhaps we should hang our frozen children, women and men over the entrance to this beautiful building at Queen's Park for all to witness the shame of this present Tory administration. The cities will not have sufficient funds to meet the needs of all segments of society.

As I grew older and was apprised of the story of my father's compassion and caring for the human condition, I felt an overwhelming and lasting pride in him. When your children or grandchildren grow up and learn the story of the infamous Bill 103, will they have the same pride in you and your actions?

When we relocated to Canada, I was unaware that I had been a non-person for all my life and would continue to be so until women were declared persons and given the right to vote.

During the Second World War I married a Canadian-born British citizen, which at that time automatically

bestowed British citizenship on me. At some time along the line, unbeknownst to me, this citizenship was abrogated. Once again I was a non-person but did not find this out until 1973 when I applied for a passport. The wheels were set in motion for me to receive my Canadian citizenship certificate. Meanwhile, after much confusion and help from various levels of government, I was issued a temporary passport accompanied by dire threats that if I lost it I would not be allowed back into Canada but would be put on the bottom of the list of those wishing to emigrate from the United States to Canada. After three or four months of letter-writing, phone calls and seemingly endless red tape, I finally received my much-valued Canadian citizenship status.

In 1983, when I reached 65 years of age, I was told I had to produce the same proof again in order to apply for the old age pension. I wrote to Monique Bégin, then Minister of Health and Welfare, asking for her help, adding that I was incensed to learn that Carlos, the international terrorist, had no less than seven Canadian passports while I, who am and always have been a Canadian citizen, had been constantly denied acknowledgement of my status. She responded immediately, enclosing a personal letter authorizing the confirmation of my application and stating that I could have immediate access to her at any time. Could I have access to a lawless trustee in times of confusion? I doubt it.

## 1050

I have worked hard to establish my Canadian citizenship with my democratic right to vote. Do you wonder why I am enraged to learn that once again I am to be disfranchised at the age of 79? An appointed trustee can at any time or on any whim wipe out the decisions of my elected councillor without any recourse to the law, thus negating my democratic vote.

To me, this is the single most regressive, brutal and vicious act which has been perpetrated by a government anywhere in Canada during my long lifetime. This rapid descent into the abyss started with the bludgeoning of legally protesting workers by baton-wielding police summoned by the Tory government. Visions of the jackbooted, goose-stepping, fanatic Nazi SS, followed by the tanks rolling and rumbling through peaceful and peace-loving nations are reawakened by these hate-filled and vicious actions by this notorious Tory government.

I am truly sorry to look around this room and see otherwise reasonable, thinking and caring people allowing yourselves to be bullied and blindly led by an invisible steel wire attached to an invisible ring through your nose. I do not believe you really know who is leading you. Thus was the Third Reich born.

It is my opinion that Mike Harris is nothing but a front for Al Leach, but I do not know for whom Al Leach is a front. I suspect there are links to the multinational corporations and the financial institutions whose credo is: "The bottom line is the dollar." I would like to say that the bottom line is the same for all of us: In the end, it is six feet under the ground, not the dollar.

I will close with a brief remark made on the day of infamy, January 21, 1997. On that day, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Al Leach, was ruled by the Speaker, Chris Stockwell, to be in contempt of the

House because of misuse of public funds in the production of a pamphlet designed to influence the taxpayers. That same day the Progressive Conservatives voted to ignore and negate the ruling of the Speaker of the House, which should have been inviolate. Is this democracy? We can never again trust the Progressive Conservative of Ontario.

I finish on the following, with apologies to Dylan Thomas and William Shakespeare: "Go not gently into this dark night, but rage, rage to the last syllable of recorded time." I am enraged by this Bill 103.

**The Chair:** Ms Lush, you've used your time for your presentation and I thank you for coming forward to the committee this morning.

## PAUL SCHERER

**The Chair:** Would Paul Scherer please come forward. Good morning, Mr Scherer. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Paul Scherer:** Paul Scherer is my name and I want to thank you for hearing me today. I've come to speak in favour of this initiative, Bill 103, of the amalgamation of the city of Toronto.

I was born in Toronto, raised in the city of North York and I've worked in Toronto all my life. Driving around the city and being on the road, I've never been able to figure out where one city ends and the other one begins, but I'm astounded to find out that this seamless city is controlled by 106 municipal politicians. There are seven planning departments, seven roads departments, seven parks departments, seven human resources departments and six fire departments. This is overkill.

I know that this is largely an issue of taxation. I understand a couple of studies have been done and these studies all show that there is a minimum of \$250 million and probably \$300 million to be saved through this initiative.

I also know that there is only one taxpayer in this country and this taxpayer must pay taxes to the city, to the region, to the province and to the federal government. In the past 15 or 20 years, each one of these entities has admitted only to small tax increases, but the cumulative effect has been terrifying for middle-class citizens of this province.

Bill 103 could save \$300 million a year. This is a substantial amount that cannot be overlooked by the legislators of our day. Gone are the days when spending can be taken for granted. The electorate is demanding that all levels of governments look towards cost reductions and achieve efficiencies that reflect the same kind of sacrifice they themselves have made in their own lives.

If you, as a legislator, could save the taxpayer this kind of money, then why not consider what you could do with \$300 million. A socialist might say, "Let's enhance a social program," or "Let's wipe out food banks." A capitalist might say, "Let's give a tax cut back to the citizens." In either case, this money could be used for a definite advantage to society. In fact, if this program is going to be revenue-neutral, as the government of Ontario would like to have happen, then the money must necessarily be targeted towards social programs because there will be downloading of welfare costs and welfare costs will be borne in a greater percentage by the municipality.

In this proposal, I like the idea that there will be fewer politicians. We will go from 106 elected politicians to 44 politicians. To my mind, there has been a cost and thrust in the last decade or so to replace community involvement with elected politicians. Elected politicians take away a taxpayer's say in the ongoing management of their community and make them feel estranged from the process of government.

This proposal will establish community councils and neighbourhood committees that will provide the necessary management structure needed to run an efficient city. It will allow the local inhabitants of a community to once again have a say in how their neighbourhoods look and run. This will protect the nature of their communities and assist in the management of them. This is more community, not less.

The proposal to have two councillors for every federal riding just makes common sense, which is long overdue in our political system. It makes it easy to understand who represents you and makes teamwork possible across all political lines. What could be more constructive?

As a business person and a citizen, I feel I must address the most shocking thing that I have read in this whole debate. I have learned that the combined total of all the bylaws in the seven municipalities is 184,000. I am left to wonder if there is anything that I can do in my daily routine that is not against some law. Even if you divide it by seven, 27,000 per municipality, it's overkill. It's time to rethink things. Is this what our parents came to this country for, 184,000 bylaws?

Last, I'd just like to speak a little bit about the referendum being imposed on the citizens of the seven municipalities involved here. I've never seen a more self-serving exercise than this in my life. There is a huge amount of money being spent on this endeavour in the guise of fairness and public input. In fact, this referendum is so unfair that it should be relegated to a simple public opinion poll or, at best, a petition. The question is unfair, the sponsors are public about the desired result, and public money is being spent to skew the result in the favour of a few elected politicians whose desire is to preserve their own bailiwick.

To me, this is probably the most compelling reason to enact Bill 103. When our elected politicians act on their own behalf instead of the people they represent, then it's time for a change. Thank you for your time.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Scherer. Mr Marchese, there's about three minutes for questions.

1100

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Scherer, thank you for coming. I've got quite a few questions actually. You find the referendum that the mayors are doing self-serving. Do you also find that newsletter the government produced, which the Speaker found in contempt, self-serving?

**Mr Scherer:** I don't know the details behind all that. I think political parties will put out their message and, yes, that's self-serving.

**Mr Marchese:** I thought you would want to be able to comment on that; given what one level of government has done you find self-serving, that you might think the same for the other level of government.

Mike Harris said before the election: "I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities." That's what he said before the election. What do you think of that?

**Mr Scherer:** I understand Mike Harris to have said before the election that he was in favour of one-tier government.

**Mr Marchese:** Before the election he was in favour of local government and in favour of getting rid of Metro.

**Mr Scherer:** My understanding was that he always had said, "We're going to go to a one-tier government."

**Mr Marchese:** You also say that the bill could save \$130 million, but every study —

**Mr Scherer:** I said \$300 million.

**Mr Marchese:** Three hundred?

**Mr Scherer:** Yes, \$300 million.

**Mr Marchese:** Every study that we have looked at, other than that quickly put together report that was done in two weeks which has been discredited by most people of note — every professor who's looked at it, Professor Sancton, Professor Kitchen and this consultant Mr Cox who appeared before this committee, says there are no savings in fact, that bigger is not obviously better in this particular matter and that the costs are likely to be higher than what the gut feeling of this government is all about. How do you defend this gut feeling of savings versus the researched evidence that says that isn't the case?

**Mr Scherer:** First of all, if you don't do it, you don't have a chance. So you must do it and you must go down the road and savings will be found. It only makes sense that when you amalgamate and you get rid of seven parks departments, seven human resources departments, six fire departments, there are going to be savings. That only makes sense.

**Mr Marchese:** Yes, I realize that, and Mr Leach says the same thing as you all of the time. He says: "There are going to be savings. Trust me. When you amalgamate these services, there are going to be savings." Yet people of note, of a great deal of credibility, say that's not the case. I guess you believe Leach, and I understand that. But I would like some firm foundation before I take a position and I'd like to believe that someone is supporting me. Mr Leach has very few to support him except this gut feeling, that you obviously share.

**Mr Scherer:** Of course I share it because I've always seen savings in these kinds of efficiencies and I've never seen it fail.

**Mr Marchese:** All the evidence speaks against it, but I thought I'd make that point.

Now you say community involvement has been replaced by politicians. That's a very interesting point of view. I've never heard that before.

When I was a trustee with the Toronto Board of Education, we fought hard to get parents involved because we knew that in getting parents involved, achievement of their own children would increase. The research speaks to that. So we had to fight hard as trustees in the Toronto Board of Education to do that. I'm not saying that if we weren't there that might not have happened. But it was me, for example, who had to argue to set up a parent

involvement work group, and as a result we have found ways to get people involved. That was the intent of what we existed for as politicians, but you're saying quite the opposite. You're saying community involvement has been stopped literally because of politicians.

**Mr Scherer:** Yes, it's stopped because a politician will naturally try — in my experience in politics in my lifetime you will try to set up a paid entity that will replace the community involvement, and that's where I always see it starting to break down. In other words, instead of people involved in a community, it's "Let's get the government to do it."

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Scherer, for coming forward this morning to make your presentation to the committee.

Would Marwyn Syed please come forward. No? How about Stig Harvor?

### STIG HARVOR

**The Chair:** Would Stig Harvor be in the room? Good morning, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Stig Harvor:** Thank you for inviting me. My name is Stig Harvor. I am a retired architect. I propose two parts for my presentation. In the first, I want to state my specific reasons for opposing a megacity based on my life experience and professional training as an architect. In the second part, I want to comment on the process chosen by our provincial government to establish a megacity within Metro Toronto.

In architecture, we often talk of the human scale. By that we mean how buildings relate to us. Are the buildings too big or bulky or too impersonal for us to feel comfortable? Is attention paid to small details that can engage us and delight us?

Successful human organization has the same attributes of human scale. Organizations on a human scale, whether public or private, it does not matter, invite participation. They encourage creativity in people, which leads to new ideas and solutions. People feel valued. They can see the results of their efforts. They feel good about themselves. They see how they fit in with others. This is how we build healthy, strong communities.

One city government for 2.3 million people is no longer a human scale organization. It's as if the drafters of Bill 103 had an inkling of this when they included a brief reference to neighbourhood committees. The interesting thing about these neighbourhood committees is that they seem to be pale and powerless substitutes for existing municipalities. There is not even an assurance they will be elected.

If there is a need for such committees to introduce a human scale to city government, why destroy the existing structure of municipal government which has successfully encouraged and established citizen participation and public-private partnerships within Metro Toronto? It's exactly this citizen involvement which has greatly contributed to the Toronto area's position as the most livable and lively major city in North America, perhaps in the world.

Why destroy that complex organization and create something new on an inhuman scale? It defies logic. Why

fix it if it ain't broke? It defies economics. Beyond one-half million to one million people, the economy of scale is reversed. It defies basic human nature and experience, which we all share, even in this room.

We also know, if we have lived in the real world for many years, that human organizations are frail creatures, especially democratic institutions. You do not establish a well-functioning organization with the stroke of a pen or a new organizational chart on a piece of paper.

In the 1990s, large private corporations have been seduced by theories of restructuring and downsizing. The results have been mixed, often disappointing, sometimes disastrous. Looking back, an American guru of these theories said recently that since he was an engineer by training, perhaps he had not taken sufficient account of the human factor. Our provincial government is making the same basic mistake and the citizens of Metro Toronto will suffer the sad consequences.

Now for part two, the process. These days I wonder if I am still living in Ontario. I've lived here for 40 years. I have seen my province grow and prosper. Progressive Conservative governments have ruled for most of those years. Although progress in social policy was slow, the governments listened to their critics and to the people and brought about orderly change. No more. Today I am faced with a government which is Progressive Conservative in name only. It is a government dedicated to what it calls a Common Sense Revolution. We are getting the revolution all right, but not the common sense.

It is a rigid, arrogant government which has simplistic solutions to society's complex problems. It has an absolute fixation on two ideas: first, eliminate the deficit and, second, eliminate anything that stands in the way of business interests.

### 1110

In order to get its way, our provincial government deliberately creates a crisis atmosphere where there is no true crisis and then bullies its way through. It has adopted the tactics of the blitzkrieg. It overwhelms the public and the opposition with a simultaneous avalanche of issues and actions so there is no time to understand what is happening. It sows chaos and confusion. It provides insufficient time for informed public debate. I ask myself again: Do I still live in Ontario?

The abuse of the democratic process has created a wide groundswell of citizen opposition to Bill 103. Our government would do well to remember that the originators of the blitzkrieg in the Second World War won early victories but lost the war.

In spite of its disregard for basic democratic processes, the provincial government still appears to ride high in the polls. Why? Civilization is a veneer below which lurk dark forces of our human nature. Many people today are fearful and insecure in the face of rapid social and technological change and lasting economic uncertainty. Under these stressful conditions, people seek strong leaders who have simple answers to complex problems — cut first and ask questions later — who can create scapegoats: welfare recipients, civil servants, unions, what they call excess politicians, lefties; leaders who say what they will do and do it, even when they never mentioned a megacity before.

It is the *führer* principle that I experienced as a boy in Europe. By this, and I want to make this clear, I'm not saying this government is fascist. What I do say is that the same mass psychology is at work. I ask myself: Where is my Ontario heading?

In closing, I would like to mention some comments by Mr Steve Gilchrist — I wonder where he is. He said he would be here; I asked him before I started. In the Toronto Star of February 6, he is reported as saying that some of the speakers, possibly like me, who oppose Bill 103 have crafted our submissions consistent with the guidelines of the group called Citizens for Local Democracy, which I incidentally proudly support. I deeply resent the implication by Mr Gilchrist that I am a parrot of someone else's instructions or views. I'm not a trained seal. I'm a citizen of what you might call mature years. I can engage in a civil discourse without promptings from anyone. I have formed my own opinions based on my varied life experience. For Mr Gilchrist to imply that I and others like me are tools of someone else is truly shameful. I would like Mr Gilchrist to apologize for his insulting slur, for belittling honest citizens who happen to disagree with him. I await his answer.

**The Acting Chair:** Does that conclude your presentation?

**Mr Harvor:** Yes. Do you know where Mr Gilchrist is?

**The Acting Chair:** I think he's just stepped out for a moment.

**Mr Harvor:** I saw him leave and I asked him if he could stay. He said he was coming back. He was just picking up a copy of Hansard.

**The Acting Chair:** Okay. Is that the end of your presentation? We have about 30 seconds for questions from the government side.

**Mr Harvor:** Okay, so Mr Gilchrist won't be here.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Chairman, could I suggest that we hold that 30 seconds down to when Mr Gilchrist returns, so he can have that 30 seconds?

**The Acting Chair:** Is there unanimous consent for Mr Colle's motion to put off —

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale):** I would like to ask that I be designated to ask questions.

**The Acting Chair:** So there's not unanimous consent then?

**Mr Hastings:** I'd like to ask Mr Harvor a question regarding this —

**Mr Colle:** Excuse me. If I could just clarify that. I made a motion for 30 seconds to the Chair —

**The Acting Chair:** Mr Colle, I asked for unanimous consent and in my opinion there was not unanimous consent.

**Mr Colle:** I didn't hear anybody say no.

**The Acting Chair:** Mr Hastings has a question and Mr Hastings has 30 seconds.

**Mr Hastings:** Do I have an opportunity to ask a question and do I get 30 seconds?

**The Acting Chair:** You get 30 seconds, Mr Hastings.

**Mr Harvor:** Do I have a chance to ask Mr Gilchrist what I asked him?

**The Acting Chair:** That's the 10 minutes for your presentation, Mr Harvor. Mr Gilchrist, I believe, will be

back in a moment and you can ask him that question at that time.

**Mr Harvor:** I can't ask the question?

**The Acting Chair:** You can ask, but we do have other presentations.

**Mr Harvor:** Yes, but can I ask it then after the next presentation?

**The Acting Chair:** No. You've effectively used up your 10 minutes.

**Mr Harvor:** But Mr Hastings just said that he would forgo —

**Mr Hastings:** Not forgo.

**Mr Harvor:** Not forgo, but at least ask this question.

**The Acting Chair:** No. We've used the 10 minutes. Thank you, Mr Harvor. Our next presentation is Mark Magner.

**Mr Colle:** On a point of order, Mr Chair: The gentleman asked for 30 seconds —

**The Acting Chair:** Mr Colle, we asked for unanimous consent. There was not unanimous consent. We were past the time —

**Mr Colle:** No one has said no to the 30 seconds.

**The Acting Chair:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Mr Marchese:** Two thirds unanimous consent.

**Mr Colle:** Yes, give him 30 seconds.

**The Acting Chair:** There is a no.

**Mr Harvor:** Who said no?

**Mr Marchese:** All the Tories.

**Mr Hastings:** On a point of personal privilege, Mr Chair: I had a question to ask of Mr Harvor. I didn't have an opportunity to ask it. Mr Colle, in fact, has inserted himself into the questioning. I try not to do that when the Liberal side is doing it. He makes a proposal regarding the deputant's situation, and then Mr Marchese comes along and says that they have now refused to deal with the no.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Chair, is that a point of order?

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Chairman, point of order. Please.

**Mr Marchese:** Is that a point of order, Mr Chairman?

**Mr Hastings:** It is a point of order.

**The Acting Chair:** Mr Hastings has the floor.

**Mr Hastings:** Point of personal privilege, then.

**Mr Marchese:** It's not a point of order, Mr Chair.

**The Acting Chair:** Mr Hastings has the floor.

**Mr Marchese:** I realize that —

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Chairman, I will relinquish the floor. We will just give these gentlemen the questioning all the time. It's just absolutely appalling to see this happen.

**The Acting Chair:** Our next presentation is Mr Magner.

**Mr Hastings:** It's okay for them to do it, but when we want to ask a question —

**The Acting Chair:** Mr Hastings, please.

**Mr Hastings:** — no, it's not proper or appropriate.

**The Acting Chair:** Mr Harvor, we've used up the 10 minutes.

**Mr Hastings:** My apologies, Mr Harvor, but —

**Mr Harvor:** Well, I feel I really deserve an apology and I would like that apology to come from Mr Gilchrist.

*Interruption.*

**The Acting Chair:** Order from the audience. I will not tolerate that.

## MARK MAGNER

**The Chair:** Our next presentation is Mr Magner. Mr Magner, you have 10 minutes.

**Mr Mark Magner:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee. I'm grateful for the opportunity to speak to you. I live just outside Metro Toronto, and have many friends who live in its cities.

One of them lives in the Bloor and Jane area with his wife and daughter. Nearly every day, they walk to do their grocery shopping, often creating their meals from a selection of offerings at unique shops that have settled in their neighbourhood. On the way, they often meet people, stop for a moment to say hello. The daughter's school is a few blocks away, where they again regularly meet people from the area who have become friends through frequent meetings on the streets or in the parks or at various events in the area. Various community parties, meetings, dances, and other events occur so frequently that our friends often feel guilty at having to miss one or another community event due to conflicts in their schedules. They know their neighbours and the various happenings in their area with an intimacy that my wife and I have come to envy. We, who years ago decided to live outside the city because we wanted a sense of community in our children's lives, sometimes feel that our friends in the big city have a tighter and closer community than we do.

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If you ask our friends where they live, they don't say "Toronto." They tell people they live in Swansea. But Swansea doesn't exist, at least not in the sense that some critics of Bill 103 seem to believe it should exist. At one time it did. It had official boundaries. It had a town hall, with a mayor and a local council of elected politicians. It had its own fire department, tax department, and other well-meaning staff and officials. It has none of those things now.

More than 30 years ago, the provincial government amalgamated the village of Swansea into the city of Toronto. A number of other municipal governments disappeared at the same time: Forest Hill, Weston, Mimico, Leaside and others. In each of these municipalities, critics attacked the government's amalgamation plans. My friends and I — I'd like to think we were pretty youthful then — remember some of the debate. People said their communities would disappear, be swallowed up by the larger municipalities they were being amalgamated with. They said they would lose their identity. They said they would suffer from poor political representation because they would have fewer politicians elected by them to focus on their interests. These were understandable concerns, but the status quo at the time was becoming inefficient and costly for all residents. It had to be changed.

More than 30 years later, it's clear that the concerns were unwarranted. People I know in Swansea and Forest Hill and Mimico are proud of their communities. They continue to have an identity both within and outside of their old borders. While it must be admitted that some of my friends don't feel well represented by their local elected councillors, that problem is not unique to the communities in which they live.

Close to my home, the venerable town of Thornhill disappeared years ago. It wasn't just amalgamated with another city, it was split right down the middle, with half of it being amalgamated into the town of Markham and half of it being amalgamated into the city of Vaughan. Years later, ask virtually any resident of the area, on either side of that split, where they live and you will hear "Thornhill." My own town of Richmond Hill is likely to disappear as a municipality, maybe in the next year or two. I'm not worried.

I'm confident that Swansea and Forest Hill and Thornhill and Richmond Hill are going to continue to exist, in all ways that are really important, for many years to come because communities and neighbourhoods are not defined by governments. In fact, I and my friends and neighbours would argue that typical municipal government attempts to define the communities they are supposed to represent are often dismal failures.

Our communities are defined by the people who live in them. They, and not governments, are the reason we have so many interesting communities in the greater Toronto area and why we will continue to have them long after the unnecessary governments are gone.

Communities are neighbourhoods and people, not municipal governments or municipal boundaries. The artificial and invisible barriers between current municipalities should be removed, and the communities and neighbourhoods will be strengthened as a result.

As a provincial taxpayer, my interest in this committee's proceedings is also keen. I know that the taxes I pay to the province are being used in part to subsidize each of the area municipal governments that is currently clamouring for its continued existence. My taxes help pay for separate transit systems, separate roads departments and other duplicated services and their bureaucracies in each municipality.

I also know that other duplicated facilities and services that may not be provincially subsidized are also, in the end, subsidized by me. I travel here several times per week, park here, do business here, eat in restaurants here, shop here, all of which cost more because the people I'm dealing with have to pay taxes to support an inefficient and wasteful scheme of interlaced municipal government. It has to be changed.

I understand that about 70% of municipal services are already delivered Metro-wide. It just doesn't seem to make sense to have seven governments, seven parks departments, seven roads departments, seven human resources departments, six fire departments, seven planning departments, and a number of other duplicated groups of bureaucrats, all of those to deliver just 30% of the services required by the citizens living here.

It doesn't make sense to have these governments competing with each other for growth and jobs, often by offering various incentives which in the end cost all of us money, and sometimes more valuable things such as security and safety and quality of life. It is surely possible to get the same services, probably better services, for less tax through a more efficient promotion and delivery system which has just one set of managers.

It has seemed to me from the start that the current provincial government has followed at least five basic

principles in planning these changes and others that it is considering. These principles seem elementary to me and my friends and neighbours, but they have seemed incomprehensible to most bureaucrats and politicians until Premier Harris came along. I am completely persuaded that they make sense.

1. There is only one taxpayer. Whatever shell games are played, one of the latest ones being garbage bag tags, there's only one of us who is going to have to pay that tax in the end.

2. Ontarians are entitled, I am entitled to know how my tax dollars are spent on services, and we deserve accountability from those making the spending decisions.

3. Whenever possible, one level of government should be fully responsible for a service, instead of the current duplication and overlap.

4. Local services should be delivered at the local level unless there is a really compelling case for delivery on a broader scale requiring uniform standards.

5. Taxpayer savings must be realized, can be realized, should be realized by ending administrative overlap, not by compromising the quality of the services themselves.

The government's goals of less government, better services and lower taxes should remain firm. When it discusses its plans with the municipalities, the unions, the school boards and, most of all, with the citizens of Ontario, it should not lose sight of those goals.

For 10 years prior to the current government our province and the greater Toronto area were losing their place as the economic powerhouse of a strong, united and prosperous Canada, and for 10 years I and my friends and neighbours have suffered as debt soared, taxes climbed and jobs left. I believe Ontario needs major change if we are to turn ourselves around and that this bill is just part of the change that needs to be made.

There was a pretty serious recession in the 1980's and it seems that governments that came before the Mike Harris government came to power want us to believe that all of these problems are the result of the recession. But I don't believe that's true. I believe the huge tax increases imposed on us in the past 10 years are a big part of the problem. I believe the provincial management of our welfare system —

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Magner. You've come to the end of your time. Unfortunately, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up.

**Mr Magner:** Okay, thank you.

Our welfare cost increase of 600% in 10 years is part of the problem. I believe that an increasingly byzantine system of provincial, regional and municipal government is part of the problem.

It seems to me that Premier Harris is about making government more efficient. He's about delivering compassionate, high-quality services well. He's about leaving more money in my pocket to support my family, to pay for my daughters' education and to save so I can support myself in my retirement. He sounds like good common sense to me and I hope he continues his revolution.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Magner, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Mr Grimes, we've had the conversation several times. I've heard five interruptions from you

during that last speaker. We've had the discussion. If you can't be quiet and remain in the room, then don't remain in the room. Room 230 is an overflow room where your input wouldn't disturb any of the presenters.

#### ONTARIO COALITION OF SENIOR CITIZENS' ORGANIZATIONS

**The Chair:** Would Bea Levis come forward, please. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Bea Levis:** Thank you very much. I want to introduce my colleague, Don Wackley, who will also participate in this. We want to thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation today.

The Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations is a coalition of over 95 seniors groups and numerous individuals from across Ontario, representing the concerns of over 500,000 senior citizens. OCSCO unites both large and small groups, from community groups, women's, ethnic, native, union and veterans organizations on matters affecting the quality of life of the senior citizens community.

1130

Bill 103 is all-encompassing and has serious implications for all members of society. We see three areas of Bill 103 that will cause the greatest damage. One of the most detrimental consequences will be the dumping of health and social services on to municipalities. The second negative ramification is actual value assessment and the effect it will have on property taxes, and the last is the dismantling of local democracy and accountability.

The dumping of health and social services, one of the most disturbing problems that arises from Bill 103: Transferring such services as old age homes, nursing homes, community-based services for seniors, public health services, social housing, welfare, ambulance services and a wide range of other health and social services to the municipalities will be disastrous. This is especially true for Metro Toronto, where the majority of the most vulnerable, such as welfare recipients, the disabled and seniors live. This dumping of services will intensify the inequities between Metro and the surrounding communities; however, all municipalities will face the same choice: cut services, increase taxes and increase user fees.

The Harris government is only looking at the short-term gain on the province's books, not the long-term impact on health and social services. This government has not accounted for escalating demands for social programs in periods of economic decline and the growing needs of an aging population for long-term-care programs, housing and related services.

Seniors fear that one of the most drastic consequences of Bill 103 will be the cost-cutting measures taken within the health care system. Health care, under the Constitution, is a provincial responsibility and there is a great risk of fragmenting the system when municipalities are expected to cover 50% of long-term-care funding. In particular, northern and rural communities will have great difficulty delivering long-term-care programs. With hospital closures throughout the province, there will be an increased demand for home care services and long-term-care facilities. As the numbers of frail seniors increase,

municipalities will face implementing user fees, cutting services and privatization as their only choices.

Non-profit housing will also be drastically affected. This is especially important for seniors because social housing enables them to have a decent quality of life within a limited income. In addition, many non-profit homes offer programs and services to help seniors and the disabled with basic living needs. Many of these support services will be jeopardized. Within the first year of the Harris government, new construction of co-op and non-profit housing stopped, and rent control will in effect be soon ended.

The Conservative government is about to make the municipalities pay mega-millions in annual subsidies for social housing. This is in addition to much-needed repairs to the older non-profit housing buildings. OCSCO fears that municipalities will cease to subsidize non-profit homes since financial pressure to carry social housing will be too much.

Public transportation will also suffer. Many low-income individuals rely on public transportation because they can't afford to drive or take a taxi. This system gives seniors, the disabled, students and low-income families accessibility and safe access to their destination. With new responsibilities, municipalities may choose between increasing fares or privatization to keep the transportation system viable. With the certainty of increased fares, many seniors will be unable to attend the programs and services which keep them active and independent. The weak and marginalized groups in our society will be dealt a harsh blow. I want to assure you that isolation is a terrible thing and I hope none of you ever have to face that in your old age.

I'm going to ask my colleague now to continue with actual value assessment.

**Mr Don Wackley:** The government states that actual value assessment will allow municipalities to get their fair share in property taxes. However, homeowners and renters alike will pay higher property taxes. The Conservative government has said there will be a phase-in period and seniors may not have to pay the increase until they sell their home. This government does not want to acknowledge that for many seniors, all they have left is the equity in their home. Therefore, many will rely on the sale of their house to pay for long-term care and other retirement costs. When they sell their houses, they'll be hit by high property taxes and higher fees for long-term care. The government will make low-income homeowners pay their increased taxes up front. These families will have nothing left over for when they need it the most. This is a further blow to those who are the weakest.

**Democracy and accountability:** The megacity redefines what local government and accountability means. One of the strongest points selling Bill 103 is that the megacity will be "more efficient and effective." I would remind you that local governments are already doing a good job. As part of their responsibility, they stay close to the people who elect them. How can making one large government make it any more efficient and effective? Each community has its own programs and services that are specialized for that population. Having one large government will only make it more bureaucratic and less

individualistic. Citizens now have a voice in municipal government. Where will our voices be when we must deal with one large bureaucratic maze? The megacity will force a reduction in democratic representation and accountability of local governments.

In conclusion, Bill 103 will lead to a deterioration of the once proud provincial standards for programs which provide support services to seniors, the disabled, the frail, the poor and the community at large. We will all pay more and we'll all get less.

**Mr Hastings:** Thank you, Mr Wackley and Ms Levis, for coming in today. My question concerns the actual issue of property taxes. First, before I get into that, I'd like to ask you, how many members does your organization represent, approximately? How many members are in your organization?

**Ms Levis:** With all the organizations that are members, approximately 500,000.

1140

**Mr Hastings:** Within that number, what would be the distribution within the suburban cities of Metro Toronto, say, East York, North York, Scarborough, Etobicoke?

**Ms Levis:** We have a large representation from outside Metro, you understand, throughout the province, but within Metro, I would say that the suburban — they're not suburban any more, Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough — account for at least half or more. We don't have a very large inner-city Toronto population.

**Mr Hastings:** Given that your organization opposes, I presume, both market value assessment and actual value assessment, can you explain to me how you represent the seniors in those areas, in the suburban situations, whereby in most instances, a large majority of seniors living in Etobicoke, Scarborough, North York are probably paying under the existing property assessment system a significant higher tax.

In my own area, for example, if market value assessment had ever been implemented by the previous government through Metro council, there would have been a reduction by at least \$500. That's a very conservative, fair average. Many of the properties would have been \$1,000 off. I have many seniors who have been paying significantly higher taxes under the existing system in Metro for the last 30 years. How do you reconcile your position on MVA or AVA when you talk to those seniors who would have benefited under those decisions if they had been implemented by both the previous Metro councils and the previous governments?

**Ms Levis:** I can only say that balancing that is the fact that within the city of Toronto most of the seniors we're acquainted with are widowed or divorced older women whose only equity is in their house. They are people who eventually face the prospect of having to sell their houses to go into a long-term-care facility of some sort. Those are the people we're particularly speaking for at the present because they are people who are going to face a double whammy.

They will face higher costs for long-term-care facilities, which are higher now than they were and will presumably go up; user fees for a number of services that they didn't have before; plus having to pay an extra property tax when they sell their house on top of what

they had before. While it's true that some of the people in the suburban areas have been paying less, it's also true that many older women in particular within the city of Toronto are going to be faced with a very difficult situation.

**Mr Hastings:** In other words, you're saying to me then that my reality of what I heard for many years, at least 12 years in politics, is completely off the wall, isn't a reality at all. Are you saying to me, Ms Levis, that the elderly living in Etobicoke, Scarborough, North York etc are paying lower taxes under the existing system, when my message that I have heard for the last decade is the total reverse of that reality? They're paying significantly higher taxes.

**Ms Levis:** No, sir, I did not say that they were paying lower taxes. All I'm saying is that balancing off the seniors you're speaking of are the other seniors in the city of Toronto who will be faced with a very significant increase at a time when they can least afford it. That's the only point I was trying to make.

**Mr Hastings:** But you did say, did you not, that it was less for seniors?

**The Chair:** We've come to the end of your time. Thank you very much for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### BLACK CREEK BUSINESS CORRIDOR INTERMUNICIPAL TASK FORCE

**The Chair:** Would Jim Fleming and the Black Creek Business Corridor group please come forward? Good morning, gentlemen. Welcome to the committee. Before you begin, could each of you read your names into the record for Hansard.

**Mr Jim Fleming:** On my left is Phil Shnier of G.E. Shnier Co Ltd from the Black Creek corridor. On my right is Maggie Knap of Maggie K's fashions as well as representing western ratepayers on our task force. On my far right is John Bailie of Kodak Canada. My name is Jim Fleming. I work with Dumez Real Estate North America, who are the developers of the York city centre, or whatever it shall be named in the future, at Black Creek and Eglinton.

We have our comments written out and we have distributed copies to you, if that will be helpful. We expect to be seven or eight minutes and hope we'll have a chance for some questions.

We appreciate this opportunity to appear before you and to briefly present a number of concerns which we hope you will give your most serious consideration as you proceed with the legislation. Perhaps the quickest way to explain who we are and why we are here is to tell you we represent residents, ratepayers and small and large business people living in or near the Black Creek corridor from Lawrence Avenue in the north, south to Eglinton Avenue.

This corridor, which once was home to names like Dominion Bridge, CCM, Bauhaus and Ferranti-Packard is still, we're glad to say, the home of Kodak Canada and Procter and Gamble's Facelle division. We have an abundance of empty factories, however, environmentally damaged properties and decaying spaces. We have faced serious problems of crime and safety. For example,

Constable Todd Baylis was shot and killed in this area. As you probably know, a street in the area has been named in his memory.

If we come with a set of challenges and a checkered past, we want you to know we are a non-partisan community group working to attack the problems, identify solutions and work to apply those solutions.

In May 1995 the councils of the two municipalities endorsed the establishment of our task force and directed the staffs of those municipalities to provide the required support services. We have been meeting at three-week intervals, roughly, since then.

The merits and benefits of a cooperative effort by both municipalities and community representatives to revitalize this aging industrial basin were obvious to both councils. Since then the task force has operated as a single unit unencumbered by the municipal boundary that cuts through its core. City staffs have shared administrative responsibilities, costs and work assignments to provide the task force with the best possible service and a considerable amount of data. We are currently working on a cost-effective marketing initiative with support from the economic development staff of both cities.

The Black Creek Business Corridor Intermunicipal Task Force operates with four principal subgroups: the community cleanup and appearances subcommittee, headed by our colleague who is with us today, John Bailie of Kodak Canada; the taxation subcommittee, chaired by John Filice of CB Commercial and co-chaired by Phil Shnier, who is with us today; the police, public safety and community liaison subcommittee, chaired by Barbara Spyropoulos of JFS Restaurant Equipment; and the marketing and communications subcommittee, co-chaired by Maggie Knap of Maggie K's, who's with us today and whom I introduced earlier; as well as Frank Silverthorn from the Royal Bank. My role reflects, as I said, my position with Dumez Real Estate North America.

We have held successful cleanup campaigns; we have had a safety audit of the area completed by police experts; we have formulated positions on taxation issues and relayed those positions to the Premier and other government levels; we have conducted issues surveys within the corridor. The task force has listened to, discussed and debated relevant issues with urban planners, and for instance, in the case of taxes, education administrators. We have pursued absentee landlords; we have successfully taken action to improve lighting, resolve conflicts among competing business interests; we have produced and distributed several newsletters. We have copies with us today which we'll make available to you if you're interested.

That explains who we are and why we wanted to have some input here. We think we're a real example of community contributing to the betterment and improvement of a seriously troubled area.

**Ms Maggie Knap:** There are essentially four issues relating to this legislation that cause us concern: First, the impact of the political and administration restructuring on community-based grass-roots initiatives like our own; second, both the potentially good and potentially disastrous tax reforms this legislation clears the way for; third,

the basis or lack of studies, planning and investigation needed to ensure this action will net substantial benefits; and finally, the issue of timing.

On amalgamation itself our task force has not reached a consensus for or against. We have, however, reached a consensus on our concerns. We wonder if, on average, one elected representative per 50,000 in population and the related centralization of a huge bureaucracy won't threaten the viability of community-based volunteer initiatives like our own. Our two municipal councillors regularly attend and contribute. When we have needs and problems, we can relate directly to senior staff. We doubt that this kind of traditional municipal relationship can be successfully duplicated under the restructuring this legislation proposes.

**1150**

If voluntarism and grass-roots solution-making is sacrificed to bottom-line cost efficiencies yet to be clearly identified, we are very concerned about the survival and encouragement of community, which we now know is vital to keeping our urban core alive. This is not just a lifestyles issue. It is also an issue of the viability of small business in a big, cold city. It is also an issue of retaining the proximity of labour if we are to retain existing industry and commerce and attract new business. Please look closely at the potential impact of this restructuring on urban core communities.

The second issue, while not directly in the legislation before you, relates to it and arises from it. Tax inequities, both business and property, were constantly identified to the task force as a major part of both the blight in the Black Creek corridor and a disincentive to rejuvenation. Municipal taxation across one large municipality levied on an equalized basis would undoubtedly benefit York, as would for the majority the proposed property tax reform. However, downloading cyclically sensitive costs like social services would, for lack of any proof to the contrary, be devastating particularly to business.

We have witnessed a mass exodus of business from our area specifically as well as the whole of Metro over the last few years as companies grope for whatever will give them an edge over competitors. The tenure of those companies that still remain is tenuous. If AVA does not extend tax equalization throughout the whole GTA area as well, the loss of commerce and industry here will continue to escalate.

The third issue arises, in a manner, from the second. Successful business, large or small, survives on sound planning based on the best possible experience as well as the most trustworthy forecasts. We have been able to find little evidence of the business plan that led to this bill. Simplistically, amalgamating services makes sense, but we read and hear that this kind of initiative done elsewhere previously has led to added, not reduced, costs.

For example, will various collective agreements and varying levels of services evolve with amalgamation toward the most costly and most extensive services or to the least and poorest? Worst of all, is there any evidence that it will not cost more and provide less? Has anyone tried to identify precedents to at least establish an educated guess at where this will lead? Only reasonable research and investigation will provide responsible answers for the serious questions amalgamation raises.

Our final concern again flows from the previous issue of evidence and investigation. We are deeply concerned about the timing of this initiative. We know that no time is the right time, but we don't know what time, in terms of the interests of Metropolitan Toronto, could be worse.

Metro is only now in the recovery stage from a prolonged and particularly damaging recession. The uncertainty created by this bill and tax restructuring and shifting will, without a doubt, create a further period of uncertainty within Metro. We believe that the best possible way to minimize the level and impact of that uncertainty is to ensure there are credible answers produced to the issues being raised so that at least some of that renewed uncertainty is put to rest. Thank you.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you all for being here. I think you've put into context the many concerns everybody has in terms of, what's the impact on business, on communities?

The board of trade has specifically said that this downloading will impact in a disastrous way on Metro; David Crombie has said that; even some of their own members, like Gordon Chong, have said that. Yet the government is saying that no, it will not; not to worry, that this is a wash. The question I have for you is, what makes you think the government is going to listen to your argument as opposed to the board of trade and others who are saying that this downloading and the megacity are a recipe for disaster if done at the same time?

**Mr Fleming:** Mr Shnier will respond, if that's all right.

**Mr Philip Shnier:** We are concerned that any change that is made should not increase the burden on Metro Toronto versus the 905 area. This is not being addressed directly, but this is really the concern. As we mentioned, there are a lot of vacant buildings, and the reason for this is the differential in taxation within Metro compared to the 905 area. We certainly would hope that any changes made won't make that worse and should alleviate that situation.

**Mr Colle:** I guess the government is saying it's not going to make it worse because this new downloading is going to be done across the province, so why should Metro be concerned?

**Mr Shnier:** We just don't want it made any worse, and it should improve it.

**Mr Fleming:** If I can add, just because downloading is across the province, that doesn't mean that downloading may be a disaster. We're business people and we'd like to see proof that the reason for downloading over the longer term isn't just a way of solving current problems that have passed down from government levels but really will make the systems work better. Our great concern is that downloading, as we understand it, is going to deal largely with cyclical issues like social services, and if social services lead to cyclical pressure on business as a major source of revenue municipally, it'll be disastrous. If that's an uncertainty at this point in time, it's a double disaster for Metropolitan Toronto right now, which has had a very heavy burden anyway just picking up its traditional proportion of social services.

**Mr Colle:** I think the government fails to acknowledge that Metro has certainly 50% — I can't remember the exact number — a disproportionate number of people on

social assistance, a growing number of seniors, and child care demands are all disproportionately higher in Metro. That's what they fail to recognize and that's the scary thing about this downloading. The thing is that it is creating this uncertainty in the business community. The government is saying: "Be calm. Don't worry. This thing will work out."

Have you seen any business plan? Metro has put out figures of impacts on this. Has the government produced any business plan numbers in terms of what this will mean in taxes and services? Is there anything they've communicated with you?

**Mr Fleming:** No, we've seen nothing of that. We had resolutions, we had discussions and debate, as our brief mentioned, and we then sent letters to the Premier and to the appropriate ministers, I think, about the need to resolve the tax issue. That's why we're quite concerned that the resolution offered doesn't appear to address the inequity between Metro. We have an inequity within Metro, which indeed amalgamation in a way may respond to, which is the equalization. But if it's only equalization within Metro and doesn't deal with 905, it continues.

**Mr Colle:** That brings to mind that greenfield site. Is it still vacant? We developed the works yard with Metro there a few years ago. We cleared the old works yard. It's just on the southeast side where the city of York works —

**Mr Fleming:** The Dominion Bridge property?

**Mr Colle:** Not the Dominion Bridge. I just forgot the name. But you're still having trouble attracting new industries. In fact, you still have the exodus of industries.

**Mr Fleming:** Frankly, we have a number of land owners who are simply going to ground. We can't even get them to come to our meetings because they see no potential to sell their land or any development potential there at this time.

We don't see anything in these solutions that's going to change that. Our whole purpose of being is to try and find ways to revitalize and bring this place back to what it once was. We may not be able to have manufacturing in the same manner in the future, but we don't want to lose Kodak; we don't want to lose the principal tenants we have in the area. "Tenants" isn't the right word — property owners.

We have huge environmental problems. We're a piece of that inner core of Toronto that was once very vibrant which is really very sick. We think we may have added problems rather than fewer problems because of these recommendations.

**Mr Colle:** So this is compounding the government's decision to spend \$100 million on digging a hole for the Eglinton subway and then arbitrarily closing that down. Now you've got this second shoe that's fallen.

**Mr Fleming:** That's a different issue, but the cancellation of the subway largely cut us off at the knees. York for a long time has suffered as a municipality, and our people are torn apart on whether amalgamation is for better or for worse. What we're worried about are the attached pieces. We're a disadvantaged corner of Toronto. We happen to have a heavy amount of new labour, of inexpensive labour, but lots of settlement problems and challenges, a huge old area that's largely blighted and

dirty and needs cleanup, and we don't have anything out there to offer them in the way of tomorrow as a resolution of the tax dilemma. We don't see it unless 905 is included. We've been working for three years and the last four or five months have really set us back, we think.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this morning. The committee is in recess until 3:30 this afternoon.

*The committee recessed from 1201 to 1532.*

### LUBA ELEEN

**The Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Would Luba Eleen please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Luba Eleen:** I want to thank you for allowing me this opportunity to make a presentation. I am a retired professor of the history of art at the University of Toronto. Like many others who have spoken, I regard Toronto, where I have lived all my life, as a supremely livable city, and I should not wish to see it go the way of large metropolitan areas in the United States. I believe Bill 103 and the accompanying announcements are wrongheaded, introduced in a manufactured atmosphere of haste and crisis, and undemocratic in their tendency. I have decided to confine my remarks, however, to a comparison with the ways in which amalgamation has been carried out in the United States, in the hope that their experience can serve as a paradigm and as a warning.

I am not usually an admirer of the American system of government, but in the matter of decision-making in the ordering of municipal jurisdiction, they have something to say to us, and I would like to share with you some of the things I discovered when I looked into this question. Over the past 20 or so years, a fever for amalgamation, which they call consolidation, has gripped all parts of the country, and therefore an abundance of data is available. Whether they get what they bargain for is another question, which I shall touch on briefly below, but first, it is important to understand the normal process leading to consolidation.

Although state constitutions give their legislatures control over the chartering and dissolution of cities, there has never been an instance of consolidation imposed from above. The impulse for a change in structure invariably comes from below. Typically, a group of reform-minded citizens gets together, usually in an attempt to remedy the terrible conditions in the decaying city core, or in response to corruption in city politics, or in the hope of more efficient and more economical government. In other words, they begin with the kind of mess that we are sure to end up with as a result of amalgamation.

Augusta, Georgia is a typical example, where private citizens began advocating consolidation as early as 1948. Not until 1974, however, did they manage to hold a referendum, which, like all of the other references to referendums I have encountered, required a majority vote of each of the constituent parts as well as of the whole. This referendum was defeated, as were two further attempts. Finally, the required majorities were achieved only in 1994, and a charter was drawn up for presentation to the state Legislature. The small community of

Hephzibah voted against the referendum and was therefore excluded from the enlarged municipality.

They gave serious attention to the transition mechanism, overseen by a transition task force made up of representatives of the constituent communities and local members of the Legislature. They sought advice from citizens, holding hearings at sites throughout the county. Everything in this process was the opposite of the one we are currently undergoing: the impetus from below, the leisurely pace, the democratic choice, the wide participation in the transition.

Will the citizens of Augusta achieve their desired aim of efficient, economical government? With careful planning — remember that they have only two constituent parts, not seven — can they avoid the confusion experienced by four city governments in Virginia, where "Merger and incorporation did little more than place an additional burden on already strained resources and most of the efforts of the merged cities had to be directed towards immediate service needs"?

Will they experience the disappointment of nearby Athens, Georgia, where city employees, despite the fact that they had retained their jobs and improved their salaries, after three years of consolidation were of the opinion that "Mergers do not create efficiency, effectiveness, fairness or responsiveness," according to a study by Dan Durning? This author reviews a broad spectrum of literature on the subject of consolidation, and he comments on the findings of public choice researchers and political economists. This is a general conclusion drawn from many studies: "Metropolitan fragmentation — not consolidation — has substantial benefits," and, in connection with the supposed economic advantage, "The preponderance of research has supported the conclusion that greater fragmentation is associated with lower government costs in large metropolitan areas."

All of the communities I have referred to so far are quite small, in the 250,000 population range, often consisting of only two original units. How much greater are the problems resulting from the consolidation of Indianapolis, a city of 731,000, still only one third the size of Metropolitan Toronto but with a similar configuration of old city surrounded by newer suburbs. Consolidation came about in 1968, when Republicans won control of the state, county and city governments, and cooperated to put through a charter for a consolidated municipality, called unigov. Unlike megacity, unigov was not completely imposed from above, yet it lacked the usual referendum-generated impetus.

#### 1540

The resulting enlarged city council has carried through some mega-projects, such as a domed stadium and a convention centre, but the disadvantaged sectors of the community have failed to benefit. According to a study by Blomquist and Parks: "Public finance in Indianapolis shows little effect from the unigov reorganization. In particular, the structure of public finance under unigov does not reflect significant efforts to use the larger jurisdiction of the city-county government to effect wealth or income distribution within the metropolitan area."

In the meantime, the centre of the city, old Indianapolis, continues to decay. The houses in the centre of the

city are in bad condition, and you have already heard the story of residents raising money to repair their streets. The reason they had to do this is that infrastructure improvements tend to favour the former suburbs.

There is a political dimension to this disparity: Since consolidation, the unigov city council has been in the hands of a Republican majority elected by the strength of numbers in the former suburbs. Old Indianapolis, which tends to vote Democrat, has therefore never been able to have a strong representation of its interests. As a result, voter participation has declined to 17.5%. Obviously the inhabitants of the centre consider their position hopeless. Some of you who, if you were American, would vote Republican might view this as a desirable state of affairs, but I say that such a situation of permanent majority is bad for democracy and disastrous for the city. I don't want to see this happen in Toronto. The centre of the city and the surrounding municipalities, both in Indianapolis and Toronto, have different interests and different ways of life and should be allowed to maintain political control over them.

The examples I have cited here indicate that amalgamation, even when carried out in the most democratic and careful way, is not a guaranteed path to more efficient and economical government. In the context of Bill 103 and the accompanying downloading, it is a formula for decay and crisis. Bill 103 will increase, not solve, Toronto's problems. I urge you to withdraw it and start afresh with the full participation of all those involved.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Eileen, for coming forward and making your presentation today. You've effectively exhausted your allotted time, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward.

#### DAN BAXTER

**The Chair:** Would Dan Baxter please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Dan Baxter:** Good afternoon. Thanks very much for having me, ladies and gentlemen. As Mr Maves was just saying, my name is Dan Baxter. I'm a Toronto resident as well as a student of business in my fourth year.

I'm here today to appeal to your sense of reason, I guess, which is a quality that I feel has been strangely absent among the forces fighting against the megacity. What I've been hearing from those people is that the provincial government is tampering with a system that works. I don't see any evidence whatsoever that this system in fact is working right now.

For instance, this morning when I got up, after our huge snowfall last night, my street still hadn't been plowed. It wasn't plowed all day yesterday. Even Queen Street — I live in the Beaches area — which is, I guess, a relatively main thoroughfare, didn't show any evidence of being plowed. Another example would be the TTC. If you call Wheel-Trans, it takes 45 minutes to an hour and a half to get Wheel-Trans up and running. I don't see that as a system that works.

Another assertion of the anti-amalgamation forces is that the provincial government cannot be trusted to fairly

and equitably conduct reform in Metro. I guess my question is, if the provincial government can't be trusted, then who can?

My grandfather was a pork farmer in southwestern Ontario and he always said you can't ask a hog to butcher itself. We've asked both the cities and Metropolitan Toronto to draft a proposal. We've seen these proposals. The cities essentially advocated Metro council being eliminated, Metro council advocated the cities being eliminated, and somewhere the cash-strapped town of Toronto managed to scrape together \$900,000 to launch an anti-amalgamation campaign. Basically what we are seeing is that any other body other than the provincial government is only intent on saving its own existence and protecting and building its own fiefdoms.

I also see no good ideas coming out of any kind of anti-amalgamation proceedings. I just see a great deal of criticism. I've yet to hear any decent proposals coming out that will come anywhere close to matching the efficiencies, benefits or cost savings of the plan being proposed.

Another yarn that we're being spun in this debate is that big business wants amalgamation. So what? I believe small business, if you look very closely, wants it as well. When I was graduating high school, I had an ice cream store. I started it from scratch. I went through the entire business licensing procedure and all that kind of thing and I can tell you there's a whole lot of red tape out there. The red tape is a lot worse here in Toronto and that red tape standing in the middle of small businesses really limits the imperative that can be created with entrepreneurship.

My question is, who creates the jobs and who pays the majority of taxes? The benefits to business of amalgamation are a reduction in costs, greater responsiveness, reduction in red tape, especially with one-stop shopping, greater investment in Toronto and the fact that everyone will compete on an even playing field. As well, the amalgamation will work to protect Toronto's reputation as a great place to set up business. Being a business student, of course this is very important to me.

I think my favourite argument in favour of maintaining the status quo is that the megacity will destroy our communities. When was the last time a political organization in Canada destroyed a vibrant community through any kind of realignment of government? As far as I know, Little Portugal out on College Street west is still very much alive and vibrant. Forest Hill is still very much Forest Hill. Chinatown is very much Chinatown. No one has the time or desire in politics these days to meddle with these communities and remove their distinctive character. There's no political end; there's no point to doing that. If destruction were imminent, entire communities would be wiped out every few years at election time. That would be just following the logic down from that argument.

At any rate, it shouldn't be up to us to preserve any kind of communities. If you look at the history of Canada, for instance, there have been several distinctive groups that have been destroyed by governmental meddling, versus the Mennonites in southwestern Ontario, for instance, who have achieved successfully a very distinct,

very vibrant culture in spite of the fact that there has been no government involvement whatsoever to preserve that. As soon as we start preserving any kind of culture actively, we take that culture away. It becomes ours; it doesn't become theirs.

All change is not bad, and through the evolutionary process any of these cultures will change naturally. If that weren't the case, then we would all really still be monkeys in the jungle and, quite frankly, I don't think any of us want to be monkeys right now.

It's obviously clear with amalgamation that there will be winners and losers. Admittedly, the system isn't perfect. That's true of any kind of system that we would contrive. There's no system of government in the world that's perfect. If that were possible, there would be no need for any kind of public discussion like we're having right now.

It seems strangely absent in any press coverage that I've seen that those who scream the loudest often have ulterior motives. We should look hard at the credibility of these detractors before we take anything that they say seriously. Therefore, the province, with no vested interest in outcome, is the only political organization that can objectively review and make changes in Metro. I think we should give the megacity a chance.

Pardon me while I shuffle through my notes here.

Before the last provincial election, Mr Harris promised more efficient local government. What he said then is being implemented now with Bill 103. To me, that's democracy in action. The Harris Tories did not take Queen's Park by force. To refer to them using the names of tyrants is to merely demean the memory of the many people who suffered under those tyrants. It shows that the people who came before this committee and used those terms, having been given a truly democratic forum in which to voice their opinions, are being irresponsible and in fact are showing contempt for our democratic parliamentary system.

#### 1550

The Harris Tories, like the Liberals and the NDP, have been given power by the people. Their mandate lasts as long as the next provincial election. They must earn the majority of the people's confidence and trust before they can be returned to office. That is not dictatorship; that is democracy.

Unlike any of his detractors, Mr Harris is at least trying to repair a system that's fundamentally broken. No one appears to be volunteering to help him with this rather onerous task. Instead, they feel content to block his progress at every turn.

If, on the face of it, the average citizen has difficulty understanding the implications of Bill 103, it's because of the loaded terminology, such as "megacity," and when it comes to the mail-in referenda that the municipalities are involved in, because of the loaded questions, implying that one can either be against amalgamation or in favour of destroying the city in which one lives. Well, I'm not in favour of destroying anything. Toronto has too much going for it, excluding the Leafs of course, to talk about any sort of Armageddon in that way. What is clear to me is that those who oppose amalgamation cannot see

beyond their political biases to provide even someone like me with some basic facts to help me in my own thinking about Bill 103 so that I can reach my conclusion in my own way. After all, isn't that real democracy?

The people who are needlessly —

**The Chair:** Mr Baxter, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up. You're getting to the end of your time.

**Mr Baxter:** Sure. I'd just like to say in closing that it's a crime to deliberately lead the public down the garden path full of misinformation and self-serving rhetoric and to subject them to fearmongering and unjustified panic about the future. For the sake of Toronto and for the sake of my children, I urge you to support the megacity.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Baxter, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### SOPHIA ZAHUMENY-PHILLIPS

**The Chair:** Would Sophia Phillips please come forward.

**Ms Sophia Zahumeny-Phillips:** My name is Sophia Zahumeny-Phillips and I am resident of the city of Toronto.

Napoleon's blind rush for empire. Hitler's blind rush for empire. Where did it get them? Disgrace, dishonour, death in shame. Where did it get their countries? Bankruptcy, revolt, division, disgrace.

Harris's blind rush for empire. Leach's blind rush for empire. Where will it get them? Where will it get Ontario? You are on the road to destroying yourselves, but we will not let you destroy us, the citizens, nor our cities, nor our democratic rights.

What are the consequences of rushing blindly? What are the reasons for rushing blindly? Is there not more wisdom in taking our time, in looking at all possibilities? "Fools rush in where wise men fear to tread."

Let us learn from our children. They rarely rush. When rushing is imposed on them, there is chaos and harm. They seem to understand that it is more useful to ponder.

Nature too illustrates the consequences of rushing. A rush in nature is a tornado, a flood, an avalanche. All of these events cause destruction and high costs for everyone. Your actions will surely lead to destruction, a high cost to everyone, and probably to yourselves.

Why are you ignoring every bit of evidence that tells you that a megacity is not the answer? Jane Jacobs, Joyce Trimmer, Wendell Cox and Professor Andrew Sancton have all expressed serious misgivings about the viability and value of amalgamation.

What is broken that has to be fixed by amalgamation? What problems have you enunciated to the public and how will these problems be solved by amalgamating cities that, by and large, are not in distress?

To begin, you seem to think that efficiency will be improved through amalgamation. On what do you base this conclusion? The overwhelming majority of consultants and experts have stated categorically that a megacity would cost more to run and that savings, if any, would be short-term and minimal, compared to the overall cost and disruption.

The real problems in Toronto, and there are many — how will these be solved in this great monolith? As I see it, some of the real issues that require attention are unemployment, especially among the youth, crime, violence, racism, the homeless, child poverty, the lack of adequate and affordable housing and the growing numbers of elderly people, especially women, living in poverty. Wouldn't our energies be better invested in finding solutions to these concerns?

Who among you would deny that we have problems with violence and racism, with poverty among children, women and the elderly? How will you justify amalgamation in the face of such high unemployment among our youth, the future of our society? How will amalgamation feed the growing numbers of homeless men, women and children? How will amalgamation break the cycle of poverty, hopelessness, violence and crime? If anything, amalgamation will increase these problems. Just look at Detroit, Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles. Is our city to become a fortress town where the haves live outside and the have-nots struggle to survive inside?

We're talking about people here, not numbers. Statistics can say whatever you want them to, as the government knows very well.

To me, the proposal of amalgamation is like a smoke-screen distracting the population from the real issues at hand. This proposal of amalgamation distracts city governments from dealing with the real issues. Instead of fighting the provincial government, the cities could be using this time, energy and money furthering their visions for their own cities. We can only conclude that this is a deliberate attempt on your part to force the cities' attention away from local concerns so that you can impose your own agenda: the downloading of provincial responsibilities on to the property tax base in order to save money to fund your provincial income tax cuts. It is deceitful, sinister and an affront to the democratic process.

My second point refers to this violation of the democratic process. Does Mr Harris need to be reminded that our country was built on the ideals of consensus and mutual respect for local, provincial and federal concerns and rights? Has Mr Harris forgotten that it was his own party which worked for the creation of our federal system and its divisions of power?

By this initiative of amalgamation, you are abusing the Canadian tradition of consultation, a tradition that has garnered for our nation deep respect and admiration. Let us not forget how many of us come from families who chose our nation as their new home to escape this same degree of oppression and lack of democracy in their former countries. Specifically, the appointment of trustees and a transition team illustrates serious disregard for democratic principles. This you are doing unilaterally, without justification, against widespread opposition and in spite of overwhelming disagreement during this consultation process.

If a government can act in such a way with apparent impunity, what will it dare to do next? Is this the beginning of the end of the democratic process in the province of Ontario? I say the Tories must be stopped now. Stop and rethink. Amalgamation is not the answer. Say no to amalgamation and say no to a megacity.

1600

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** We have time for a couple of questions, and it's Mr Silipo's turn to ask questions.

**Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt):** Just one question: I take it from your comments that you would be in favour of some period of time, as some people have suggested, some delay in this whole process. I know you feel very strongly, as I do, that the megacity should just be stopped, but do you find any sense in the notion that some have put forward, saying, "Let's just stop things, take some time, whether it's six months, a year, and try to look at what the alternatives might be and come up with some more sensible solutions"?

**Mrs Zahumeny-Phillips:** I feel that time is necessary, and an awful lot of rethinking. There is so much evidence out there that tells us this isn't the way to go, the way things are happening right now.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thanks you very much, Mrs Phillips.

#### AMY KATZ

**The Vice-Chair:** I call Amy Katz to come forward. Good afternoon, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Amy Katz:** I'm really pleased to have this opportunity to speak to the committee today on the subject of the proposed amalgamation. My name is Amy Katz. I have lived my whole life in Toronto. I have been educated here, first through the public school French immersion program and later at the University of Toronto. I have opened my own small business in the downtown core with the help of provincial loans — which have since been cut — and presently employ three people.

Toronto has provided a wonderful environment in which to innovate and experiment with small business. I found my dealings with the city of Toronto — unlike the comments of the previous speaker — to be simple and expedient. My myriad questions have always been answered promptly and in a manner that has facilitated the efficiency of my operation. Much of the information that I and my business partner, Kate Cassidy, used to start from scratch was obtained through the small business self-help centre at Toronto's city hall. City hall has always seemed an accessible place to me; it is 15 minutes away from my store by streetcar and I always know where to find the appropriate office.

Toronto as a city has also proved extremely hospitable to our business. Our particular downtown neighbourhood, College and Bathurst, is vibrant and diverse. People have accepted our unlikely business — a café/clothing store — without question. We have had the opportunity to reach and cater to many different groups, all of whom live and work within a few blocks of the store. I continue to be thrilled by the creativity, energy and organization of Toronto's diverse communities.

We carry only local designers in the boutique portion of our store, and Toronto has so much serious young talent to offer. Many of them flourish in the context of the city's fashion incubator and vend their wares at the city's annual fashion street festival. This kind of exposure is essential to Toronto designers. In my experience, the city of Toronto has provided consistent, essential and,

most notably, specific support for both its creative and entrepreneurial citizens.

I feel a tremendous sense of agency in Toronto. I don't have a car; I have been able to operate effectively using the TTC. I dealt with city hall for the first time two years ago and soon felt comfortable visiting and calling. My business partner and I both felt the confidence and the sense of promise to attempt to open a small business in this city, and I attribute that to the city. It never even occurred to us that the infrastructure of the city would fail us in any way, and it hasn't.

I want to have a say in the running of my city. I want a councillor who lives near me and understands my neighbourhood. I do not wish to be represented by a volunteer whose only mandate is time on their hands and who cannot be held accountable simply by virtue of not being paid. I want to elect officials, both city councillors and school trustees, who have the time, the expertise and the mandate to represent my interests and the interests of the children I plan on having some day.

I cannot and do not expect a councillor or citizen from Etobicoke or North York to be concerned with the particulars of Toronto's urban life and the nuances of administering its various communities. I cannot and do not expect them to make informed and interested decisions for my neighbourhood. We are as unique to Toronto as Toronto is to Metro and must be dealt with as such.

It is my personal belief that government should be about empowering the electorate through strong representation on many levels. I do not want to learn how to run a neighbourhood or how to administer a school. I want to elect a politician to do it for me, and once I elect that politician, or somebody else does, I want them to make informed decisions about a community in which they have a stake while remaining accountable to its citizens.

This is, to the best of my experience, the way in which our own local government is currently structured. If there are problems with the system, which there inevitably must be, there is no question that they should be addressed. I just don't understand how firing mayors and trustees will improve cities and schools. Aren't these the exact professionals we should be turning to for both short-term and long-term solutions and advice? If we are not happy with their performance, should we not require more from these positions instead of eliminating them completely and giving volunteers the mandate to deal with some of the most important aspects of our society?

If regional government must be expanded realistically in order to include the greater Toronto area, as many reports have asserted, this should be discussed and perhaps slowly implemented. If some services are duplicated, this should also be addressed. But we have been presented with no evidence that the entire system should be trashed.

At this point, I would like to address some of the comments made this weekend by Steve Gilchrist in the *Globe and Mail's* "Mega Forum." In reference to his comment regarding the presentation of a better urban model than the proposed megacity and the paucity of real suggestions and improvements to the bill posited here at these hearings, I would like to say this:

First of all, as a constituent in Metro, I am at worst mildly irritated by the inefficiencies in local government

referred to by Mr Gilchrist. From my own point of view, I accept the status quo as it pertains to the structure of my city level of government. Given this, it is difficult to discuss Bill 103 at all. As articulated, the big problem is of course the placement of our elected officials into trusteeship. Beyond that, the premise of Bill 103 seems, to the layperson anyway, so flawed as to preclude constructive criticism completely.

Second, I would like to assert emphatically that it is not my responsibility to come up with a better urban model than the proposed megacity. The onus is on your government to come up with something better than what we have now if you do indeed honestly feel that sweeping change is necessary, and Bill 103, with its dubious savings, bulky bureaucracy, inaccessible number of councillors and frightening scheme to have neighbourhood volunteer councils advise the megacity council on our behalf, is clearly not a better alternative to our present situation. To propose unacceptable legislation while blaming the constituents for not being provincial politicians, who have the time, money and mandate to propose good legislation, is clearly an abrogation of the responsibilities of government.

My fear is not of change but of arbitrary and ill-planned action for action's sake. Whatever your political reasons for considering Bill 103, please realize that the practical consequences for us will far outlive your time in office.

I have found it consistently difficult to penetrate either the logic or the practices of this provincial government. Today I feel unrepresented by your provincial government. Fine. I didn't elect you, but I respect your mandate to govern. But I did elect Barbara Hall and I would expect you to respect her mandate to govern as well.

At this point, with the flurry of changes you are making in my city, I no longer know what to do or how to begin calculating the consequences. I do know that I will not stay in a place where I am unrepresented and where I know that others are also consistently going unheard. I will not operate a business in a city that does not — and cannot, by virtue of the way it is structured — reflect my interest.

Someday I expect to have children. I will not raise children in a city that does not have a public school system run by professionals at the board level. I will not buy a home in a city where my property taxes do not go to the maintenance of my property and the education of my children and where my income taxes do not go to the redistribution of wealth through social services. I will not remain somewhere where the interests of the electorate cannot be adequately answered by an adequate number of officials. And I will not stay in a city or a province where the ultimate goal is not to produce a sustainable and healthy standard of living for everyone, but only to produce a balanced chequebook and a substantial tax cut. I need something more to strive for; I think most of us do.

There are many young people like myself who prefer to live and work in an urban setting. If this urban setting is not maintained and considered in all its singularity, it will not flourish and we will leave. I, personally, will not raise children here. I will take my education, my expert-

ise, my business and my high hopes elsewhere, where I feel I can have a voice.

The events of the next few months will literally determine my future and the future of many other young citizens who have not yet started families and still have some degree of mobility. I anticipate the results of your deliberations with anxiety, both for myself and for those who do not have the luxury of considering this exodus.

Ontario and Toronto in particular have given me so much: universal health care, a public school education in French, a university education I could afford, a jumpstart for my business and a healthy community in which to operate. I look forward to contributing both socially and economically to the city. I have been preparing for it all my life. I hope you do not deny me this opportunity. Thank you very much for listening.

**1610**

**The Chair:** Thank you. We've got about a minute and a half for questions from Mrs Munro.

**Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York):** Thank you very much. I just wanted to understand your comment that people have suggested you have a role to play in making suggestions and you said, "No, people are elected to do that job and provide that kind of leadership." I'm just wondering if you had any specific comment on the need to maintain the status quo.

**Ms Katz:** In terms of local government, through my personal experience, the status quo has served me quite well. I opened a business in a very short frame of time. I felt that my dealings with the city were efficient and expedient. I feel represented, I feel empowered and I feel a tremendous sense of agency.

It is my understanding, having read all the different reports, that coordination on the GTA level of government seems to be a necessary step and I would support the undertaking of that. If there are inefficiencies, they should be targeted as inefficiencies and dealt with as inefficiencies. My personal understanding of it is that the problem is not structural and should not be addressed as such.

**Mrs Munro:** But you would support the need to have some kind of bigger agency, if you like, speaking on behalf of the greater Toronto area?

**Ms Katz:** I would think the Metro level of government is perhaps slightly anachronistic at this point and perhaps the GTA, but I don't think that precludes local government at all. In fact, I think it would encourage local government.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation today.

**GORD MOORE**

**The Chair:** Would Gord Moore please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Moore, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Gord Moore:** Thank you, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. I sincerely thank you for this opportunity to be heard on this issue. I'm a lifelong resident of a part of southeast Toronto known as the Beach. For over 20 years I operated a business in the city of Toronto and for the last four years of that time our

head office was in Scarborough, while we operated in Toronto and Mississauga as well.

I remember the surprise I had when I noticed that the regulations in Scarborough, compared to those in Toronto, were so different on issues such as taxes, signage and zoning. Even where the zoning classification would be the same, what was allowable was different in the two cities.

During my time in business I attended conventions and seminars all over North America and I found I was constantly explaining to other attendees the difference between Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto. In fact, when I was asked where I was from, I would always say Toronto but my business card said Scarborough, and I found I was constantly having to explain that to people from all over the world.

In fact, on one occasion I was asked the population of Toronto and I said, "A little over two million." Someone else in the group said: "But I saw a map recently that showed the populations of major cities in North America and it said the population of Toronto was only 560,000." They thought I was boasting and trying to exaggerate the population of Toronto.

I mention these things because my reaction to this proposal of amalgamation initially was very favourable. It still is, but I consider myself a reasonable person and I like to look at opposing arguments before I make a firm decision. Let's take a look at some of the arguments we've heard, the first one being that property taxes would go up — in fact one reporter said by a factor of three to four times — in the city of Toronto.

This rather shocked me, because with seven mayors, seven staffs, seven limousines, seven economic development departments, zoning departments, planning departments etc etc, ad nauseam, I find it hard to understand how there cannot be some cost savings involved. The Metro planning department has grown from 12 to 99 in the past 15 years, and that's in addition to Toronto's 176 planners.

Last year I understand more than one mayor in the six cities visited Hong Kong. In fact, I've been told that one mayor went on more than one occasion. Hopefully, this would not continue because there wouldn't be more than one mayor, my point being, of course, that there are lots of places where expenses can be trimmed.

In my own community in the Beach there's a park which has the grass cut partly by the city of Toronto and partly by Metro, but I guess that's understandable because there's an obvious boundary line between the two sections of park, that is, a park bench.

I find it difficult to understand why costs and therefore my taxes should go up, but that's a typical response of some municipal politicians: "When you get into some sort of financial crunch, raise taxes." If they do look at cutting expenses, the first things that come to their mouths are skating rinks, swimming pools and recreation centres. For those members of the committee who are from outside of Toronto, you may find it hard to believe, but it's true. Time after time, those are the services and the method that municipal politicians talk about for cutting expenses.

My other comment on the rising costs would be that I've seen it reported that there is a study by KPMG that

shows savings over the first three to five years in the hundreds of millions of dollars. I find it difficult to understand why a reporter would say that city taxes would go up by a factor of three to four times or that Mayor Hall would say taxes would go up by 11%.

Another argument is that this amalgamation process would destroy communities. Having lived in the Beach all my life, I've seen lots of change in my community, but I can't recall one single change that I can attribute to the previous amalgamations in Metro Toronto. Toronto, Scarborough, North York — these are not communities. Riverdale, the Annex, Bloor West Village, the Beach — these are communities. It's the people, the activities, the events and the shopping areas that make those communities, not boundary lines. They will continue to thrive just the same whether Toronto is large or larger or smaller.

What will destroy our cities is the petty competition and bickering among our local politicians. For example, when Toronto passed a restrictive smoking bylaw for restaurants, a North York councillor immediately wanted his city to take advantage of the situation by mounting a campaign to attract Toronto restaurateurs. Isn't that brilliant? It's this type of parochial thinking that causes people to think that the competition is from the other cities. Don't they understand and realize that the true competition is from Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, as well as the other provinces? During my 20 years in business I saw an awful lot of our supplier's either move their entire operation out of Ontario to some of those states I have named or at least put major plants into those states while keeping a sort of shell head office located in Toronto.

Another objection the opponents use is the rushing. The previous presenter mentioned this, that we are being rushed into this. Barbara Hall, when she appeared in front of this committee, kept using the phrase, "Slow down and get it right." That confused me a little bit because I was under the impression she was totally opposed to amalgamation, yet when she appeared here a week ago she said, "Slow down and get it right." Maybe she is in favour, but not in favour of the timing. I'm not quite sure.

From the time this was initially discussed to the time of implementation will be some 16 months. There have been myriad reports and studies conducted, I believe some 15, and it's my feeling that with those 15 studies and reports and an additional 16 months, that's plenty of time and there's no rush. Indeed I know this committee is sitting listening to hundreds of presentations from the public.

**1620**

Another objection — and we hear this from Mel Lastman of North York. He says we'll get reduced services, and his example is garbage collection; in North York it may have to be reduced from twice a week to once a week. Well, Mayor Mel, I live in Toronto and we've been having once-a-week garbage pickup for years now and I'm sure the good folks of North York are equally as capable as Torontonians of recycling. My average garbage in a week is one bag. Twice-a-week garbage pickup is an unnecessary luxury we don't need and shouldn't have to pay for.

Another objection is the accountability factor, that there will be fewer politicians and they won't be as close

to the citizens. My understanding of the legislation is that each councillor will represent approximately 50,000 voters. I believe that's just about half the number that each of you will represent under the redistributed boundaries and that federal MPs represent. That, combined with the municipal volunteer groups that are being established, I think will give anyone ample accessibility to be heard and to have input.

**The Chair:** Mr Moore, I'll have to ask you to wrap up. We're coming to the end of your allotted time.

**Mr Moore:** I will, thank you. Mayor Hall said she finds it insulting that she needs a trustee to monitor her, yet she is the same one who established a fund to provide money to folks who wanted to fight this amalgamation but provided nothing to people who were in favour of it and wanted to mount a campaign in that regard. East York even talked about transferring their city hall out of their assets to a private corporation so it wouldn't be counted within the assets at the time of amalgamation. Stick with the board of trustees. With these kinds of actions by our municipal politicians, we need it.

I'd like to sum up by saying that this is a continuation of a natural process that started years ago. Let's get on with it.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Moore, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this afternoon.

#### RUTH LUNEL

**The Chair:** Would Ruth Lunel please come forward. Good afternoon, and welcome to the committee.

**Mrs Ruth Lunel:** First of all, I'm not going to go on about this megacity, because I'm dead set against it. But I do have an awful lot of problems, and my presentation will be short but right to the point.

I'm here again having to voice not only my opinion but that of numerous seniors, also handicapped, with whom I deal on a daily basis and who are now trying to remain independent but are having their ability to do so eroded by the lack of foresight of our present provincial government. Downloading of transit, housing, welfare as well as numerous other responsibilities on to municipalities is ludicrous.

The now Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing made a real mess of the Toronto Transit Commission, and to allow this person to do likewise with numerous other areas without any forethought or the actual funds to bring these transfers about is certainly not the way to treat taxpayers, who don't like to see our dollars being wasted. We demand that these facilities being transferred be brought up to local community standards before even thinking of dumping them on the communities.

However, funds supposedly set aside to cover any need of the municipalities does not make sense but just proves that the lack of good repair has been eroded because of the lack of stability within our Progressive Conservative government in Ontario.

Mr Leach, and this is a message for him, you certainly picked a good member to be your parliamentary assistant: the backbencher who is the most talkative politician, who

speaks the most and says nothing. I believe he was given an award for this recently. You, Mr Leach, also received an award for the politician with the worst management record. You certainly run our transit system into a state of disrepair.

Do backbenchers not understand that they are being used as mouthpieces for your so-called peers who do not have the fortitude or confidence in what they are doing to appear before the taxpayers themselves?

We in Scarborough have had more public housing dumped into our community than any other area of Metro. This means more child poverty and welfare. Since joining Metro, we have paid taxes into the pot, so to speak, for a lot of Metro needs, as our taxes have been raised higher since becoming a part of Metro. Downloading, such as you have set out to do, will cause more hardship for those of us who at present are having a hard time coping and, as I said before, we will face a real problem because of your lack of foresight.

We are actually going backwards to the late 1930s and early 1940s. People at that time used to knock on doors and ask for some food, but now they break, enter, molest, rob, and yes, even murder, and cutbacks in police services makes them unable to cope with the ongoing crimes, especially against the elderly.

I do not believe that any of you who are now in the government know of hard times in the period mentioned above, but you must be made to realize that not everyone was born with silver spoon in their mouth but learned the hard way to survive through the school of hard knocks.

Seemingly the time has come for every taxpayer to stand up and be counted and make our demands known to persons we have elected and trusted to use our hard-earned funds for the real necessities of life. Otherwise you can and will be replaced and will no longer be able to pick others' pockets. Maybe a way to go would be a tax revolt. Without your paycheque you may learn what it is to be without and think twice about what you are doing. Also, a person who hits a golf ball around a golf course in North Bay does not a good politician make. Any jackass can do that.

I am also enclosing a copy of just what a taxpayer is and how we fit into your lives.

I'd like to add that we have no ministers with experience in education, housing, health, welfare or transportation, or they'd use their heads.

I've got a thing here that I've written out that fits every one of you:

What is a taxpayer?

A taxpayer is the most important person in a politician's life.

A taxpayer is not dependent on us; we are dependent on him.

A taxpayer is not an interruption in our work, but he is the purpose of it.

A taxpayer does us a favour when he comes to us. We are doing him a favour by listening to him.

A taxpayer is an essential part of this office, not an outsider.

A taxpayer is not just money in our pockets, he is a human being with feelings and deserves to be treated with respect.

A taxpayer is a person who comes to us with his needs and concerns. It is our job to look after him.

A taxpayer deserves the most courteous attention we can give him. That leaves a lot to be desired with this present government. He is the lifeblood of this and every government. He pays our salary. Without him we would be out of our jobs — just plain nobodies, and don't you ever forget it.

Whatever has happened to government of the people, by the people and for the people? This is not a dictatorship here in Canada, and we don't intend to put up with it, so you may as well get used to the idea of being replaced if you don't smarten up.

I have a question for Mr Newman. He happens to be my parliamentary representative.

How come I got two of these in my mailbox? I would like you to explain to me where Kennedy and Midland meet at Kingston Road.

**Mr Newman:** I can't see it. I'm not going to comment unless I can see it.

**The Chair:** Mr Newman, one second, please. Mrs Lunel, you've finished your presentation. There are two and a half minutes remaining for questions from the Liberal caucus. If they would like to allot some time, it's the only time she can get Mr Newman to answer the question.

1630

**Mrs Lunel:** I would like to finish this because, as you might not know, Mr Newman, Kennedy and Midland both run north and south, and Kennedy does not go to Kingston Road.

**Mr Newman:** On a point of order, Mr Chairman: I do not know what the speaker is talking about. If she has a piece of paper, I'd be pleased to look at it and answer her question.

**The Chair:** That's fine, Mr Newman. You can either do that in committee or outside of the committee, but it's up to the Liberal caucus at this point in time. They have about a minute and a half for questions. If they want to allot that time now or if they want to ask some questions —

**Mr Colle:** Mrs Lunel, I wonder if you could present that to the committee for evidence. We'd like to see what you got in the mail from the PC member.

**Mr Newman:** On a point of order, Mr Chair: The member has accused me of sending something out in the mail, and I have not sent anything out as MPP. I'd like the member to retract that accusation.

**The Chair:** Mr Colle, that's the clerk's —

**Mr Newman:** Chair, I'd like you to rule on my point of order.

**The Chair:** Mr Colle, if something is being handed to the committee, it's the clerk's job —

**Mr Newman:** I'd like a retraction from Mr Colle, please.

**The Chair:** Mr Newman, you have every opportunity to have a look at this piece of paper and let us know if you want to make any comment whatsoever.

**Mr Newman:** If I could see — I'd like an apology from Mr Colle, Mr Chair.

**The Chair:** Mr Colle, you have a minute. Would you like to ask questions or would you like to give that time to Mr Newman, or what would you like to do?

**Mr Colle:** I would like to just clarify. Mrs Lunel, did you receive that in the mail?

**Mrs Lunel:** The flyer I just gave you? Yes.

**Mr Colle:** Was there a return address on it?

**Mrs Lunel:** "Government of Ontario."

**Mr Colle:** So it was from the government of Ontario.

**Mr Newman:** On a point of order, Mr Chairman: Please let me have an opportunity to respond. Mr Colle obviously knows that he's going down the wrong path here by asking these questions.

**The Chair:** Your point of order is not a point of order right now. Everything is in order, and Mr Colle has the floor for another 30 seconds.

**Mr Newman:** Can members accuse members of anything?

**The Chair:** No. That's a point of privilege he can take up as soon as we're done with his questioning. Mr Colle.

**Mr Colle:** Mrs Lunel, you received this in the mail and the return address was the government of Ontario.

**Mrs Lunel:** Yes. The other one had no return address on it.

**Mr Colle:** One had no return address. What was in the envelope?

**Mrs Lunel:** Just exactly what I gave you: a letter and a flyer announcing a meeting on Wednesday the 19th in Scarborough, south of Kingston Road, and the directions were Kennedy and Midland.

**Mr Colle:** Who was inviting you to this meeting?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Colle. We've gone beyond the 10 minutes. Thank you, Mrs Lunel, for coming forward to make a presentation today.

*Interjection.*

**The Chair:** Sorry, Mrs Lunel. You've completed your time.

**Mrs Lunel:** Stand back, sir.

You're allowed to speak as the chauffeur for Mr Harris.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs Lunel, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

Mr Newman, someone can submit something like this as an exhibit to the committee. That's in order.

**Mr Newman:** The member for Oakwood accused me of sending something out. I want him to respond. I've not sent anything out. I would like Mr Colle, the member for Oakwood, to withdraw that comment.

**The Chair:** That's a point of privilege. If you want to have a look at what's been distributed, and if you did not, then that's fine; you can tell the committee that.

**Mr Newman:** I would like the opportunity to respond. It says here that there is a town hall meeting for the residents of Scarborough Centre, Wednesday, February 19, 1997, 7:30 pm at Cliffside Public School. I'd been invited by an organization within the riding of Scarborough Centre to be the guest speaker there.

This did not come from my office, Mr Colle. Perhaps that's how you conduct your business, but that's not how I conduct my business.

**Mr Colle:** I guess the deputant —

**The Chair:** Gentlemen, can I just say it's really not a point of privilege; it's a point of contention between members. As a matter of privilege, if Mr Newman says he didn't send this out and you've kind of said —

**Mr Newman:** Show me where it has my name on it, Mr Colle.

**Mr Colle:** Well, the deputant said that you sent it to her.

*Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order, Mr Gilchrist.

**Mr Newman:** This does not have my name on it.

**Mr Colle:** The deputant said that you, her MPP —

**Mr Newman:** Did not. She said the "government of Ontario."

**The Chair:** All right, gentlemen.

**Mr Colle:** Okay, government of Ontario.

**The Chair:** Now we no longer have a point of order, because we're not going to debate about what the deputant said.

**Mr Colle:** Could I have the rest of the mailing that was sent to this lady?

**The Chair:** No.

**Mr Colle:** I know they're worried about what they're putting in the mail. Obviously a lot of people —

**Interjection:** No, we're worried about listening to the presenters here, not your theatrics.

**The Chair:** Ladies and gentlemen, we'll have a two-minute recess until we regain order.

*The committee recessed from 1635 to 1637.*

**The Chair:** Mr Colle has made a presentation and some comments that you disagree with and you took the opportunity to disagree with what Mr Colle said. Hansard will cite that disagreement between members, and it is a disagreement between members, not a point of privilege between members, nor is there anything out of order at this point in time.

**Mr Newman:** What about imputing motives, Chair?

**The Chair:** He didn't really impute motives. He talked about something he had been told had come from your office, and you've —

**Mr Newman:** Point of —

**The Chair:** Just a minute. Let me finish, please, Mr Newman — and you've been on the record as saying that's not the case, so I think both people have had an opportunity to have a say on this issue which Hansard has picked up. Any further disagreement the two of you have is really outside of this committee room.

**Mr Newman:** But Chair, I'm asking you to rule that he's accused me of doing something that is not true. I'd like you to ask him to make an apology. Any honourable member would make an apology when he accuses another honourable member of something that did not happen.

**The Chair:** I think you've gone clearly on record to say that. If Mr Colle —

**Mr Newman:** I'd like you to give Mr Colle an opportunity to apologize and retract his statement.

**Mr Colle:** I'll just relate again what —

**The Chair:** No, Mr Colle, you won't. The Chair has the microphone, please, and it's the only microphone that's on. Gentlemen, I ruled on the point of privilege. I'm not forcing anyone to tell anyone anything. Mr Newman, you've had your say on the matter and Mr Colle has had his say on the matter. I have a lot of people still to make presentations today and that's what we're going to get to.

## JIM RAMSAY

**The Chair:** Would Jim Ramsay please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Ramsay. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes today to make your presentation.

**Mr Jim Ramsay:** Thank you Mr Chairman. My name is Jim Ramsay. I've lived in Toronto some 37 years. I started off as an economist in the Ontario government in 1959, when Leslie Frost was Premier. Over the period of time I worked on Ontario's participation at Expo 67, I built Ontario Place and a number of other projects, and I had the opportunity to see and be around the fringes of a lot of major developments that took place: the merger of Toronto from 13 municipalities down to six, greenbelts, 45-foot holding bylaws etc, like that. In that total period of time, I've never seen anything where there has been such an aura, such wild charges, accusations of wrongdoing, on the part of the people who have been involved in the campaign. I've never seen such a disgrace. The current campaign features attacks on people who are involved in this campaign. You've got honourable members screaming that another member lies. It's very unparliamentary and not conducive to debate; the standard is very low.

**1640**

What I think it is, of course, is the hijacking of an issue that many people legitimately have major concerns about. It's a hijacking by a leadership that has an agenda that ranges far from Bill 103. It's an attack on most of the actions that the current government wishes to follow.

I think in many cases this leadership is composed in large part of those people who, when they were in power, almost brought Ontario to its knees, who doubled the debt from \$50 billion to \$100 billion, and who were afraid to bring in a budget in the last year. And in the last year, as I recall, when we finally did get the figures, there was something wrong by about \$2 billion. As for Mr Sewell, his comments to the effect that people should be charged with treason and jailed for their opposition to Bill 103 are anti-democratic and unworthy of comment.

This sound and fury has brought the usual bunch slithering out from the rocks. For example, I went down to watch the parade on Saturday. There was a group handing out, and they were participants in the parade, "Revolution, 80 years. Russia 1917." Anyone who would commemorate something like that, which led to the deaths of tens of millions of people — so they're all out. Another thing here, the Socialist Workers, "Stuff the megacity," like this. This was being passed out along the way.

More specifically, I think there's an effort here to take away the decision and the role of the committee, the elected representatives of the people, which you are. You were elected by us to represent us. We are relying on your good judgement to evaluate this bill and report on it. I urge you not to be swayed by the goon show.

Other things that have come up that I find are very disturbing about this include the massive use of millions of dollars of public funds to fund the No side. It specifically says the No side gets the money; the Yes side doesn't. There is also the use of many civil servants who are being urged in Scarborough and other areas to get out

and work for the No side, but if you want to work for the Yes side, you can't. That's a point of concern.

Then there's the \$200-million savings that the six mayors magically came up with. This, as a citizen of Toronto, causes me a lot of distress. If they could come up with that \$200 million that quickly, why didn't they come up with it earlier? So I've been gouged.

Another point is the plebiscite, because it's not a referendum, it's not a vote, it's a joke. It's fan mail. It's open to abuse and ridicule. If you compare some of the requirements to a plebiscite such as was done on Charlottetown, first, the legislation called for consultation of the federal opposition parties on the content of the question. None of this was done. There's the requirement for a specific polling day. In other words, everyone, with some limited exceptions, is required to vote on the same day. The voting process is governed by the rules of the Canada Elections Act, so there are formally appointed returning officers. There is an official voters' list, which is compiled through a formal enumeration process. For example, my wife and my son got ballots in the Toronto one; I have not. I called down to see about getting one. You can't get through. There's one number and it's busy. It's rigged. It's phoney.

I guess my time is running out. I think what we have, in summary, is a campaign that is characterized by threats, intimidation and lies. We have a massive use of public funds and public servants to fund one part's point of view. And third, we have a ballot process which isn't worthy of the name, which is a fraud. I would, in conclusion, urge you to bear these points in mind when you report on the bill. There are other aspects that I would like to comment on but they've all been covered by many people, many times.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Ramsay. We have about three minutes for Mr Silipo.

**Mr Silipo:** Mr Ramsay, I'm a little surprised that someone who would come in front of us to be critical of those who are opposed to the amalgamation would use the kinds of words that you have, because you're putting down their tactics and their approach. You then use phrases like "slithering out from the rocks," "the goon show." It seems to me you're using the same kind of tactics and approach that you're blaming those individuals for using.

**Mr Ramsay:** I think, sir, that if you say I'm using the same types of tactics, then you acknowledge that they are using those tactics.

**Mr Silipo:** No, I'm acknowledging that you said that, sir.

**Mr Ramsay:** No, you said "the same," sir.

**Mr Silipo:** I'm acknowledging that you said that and you're then turning around and using the same kind of language that you're charging them with using. But I want to get more into the substance of one of the other points that you made, and that is around the referendum process.

It's my understanding, and this doesn't apply across because there is one municipality that is doing a poll type of system, but the ones that are holding the actual referendum are indeed using mechanisms that were passed by this government recently, just before Christ-

mas, in Bill 86. All the alternatives to the traditional voting system that we've used here in all sorts of elections are there in the law of the province as adopted, as I say, just recently in Bill 86. At that time, Mr Leach and the government were praising those as cost-effective ways of holding votes, including referenda. Now you, as well as he, I must note, are decrying municipalities for using exactly those same methods.

**Mr Ramsay:** I've consulted with a number of people who are considered to be expert in polling. I might suggest to the Chairman that you might want to bring some before your committee, and I don't think you will find anyone to speak in favour of the process that's being followed.

I'm not familiar with the points raised by Mr Leach or the legislation that you're talking about that came in before Christmas, so therefore I don't feel I can comment on it.

**Mr Silipo:** I appreciate that, and that's fair enough. I just say to you that all of those alternatives — the phone-in ballot, the mail-in ballot — were all exactly set out in the law that was passed under Bill 86. I just bring that to your attention because that is what the municipalities are following.

Again, to go beyond that to the bigger issue of the referendum, are you of the position that a referendum should not be held in this case? Because again, the problem that we have here is that the provincial government has refused, as I'm sure you know, to have a referendum held on this question. We have from time to time asked the minister and the Premier to work out with the mayors a system of holding the referendum that would include an agreement on the wording that would be put in front of people as well as a process that everyone would be satisfied would be fair and beyond reproach.

**Mr Ramsay:** I've got a list here that I received. It might not be up-to-date with respect to Ontario but, for example, it reviews what the position is in various provinces. For example, New Brunswick: No referenda are permitted. Newfoundland: Whenever it appears that an expression of the opinion of the voters is desirable on any matter of public concern, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may direct that a plebiscite be held. Northwest Territories: Plebiscites can be issued. Nova Scotia: Only in respect to sale of alcoholic beverages in communities. Ontario: At that time, and this is dated June 4, 1996, there were no legislative provisions.

**Mr Silipo:** Right.

**Mr Ramsay:** Prince Edward Island: The Lieutenant Governor in Council may direct it. Quebec: The government may order a referendum —

**Mr Silipo:** But the point is, sir —

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Ramsay and Mr Silipo. I apologize, but we've exhausted the allotted time. Thank you, Mr Ramsay, for coming forward to the committee today.

1650

MIRIAM WYMAN

**The Chair:** Would Miriam Wyman please come forward. Good afternoon, Ms Wyman, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Miriam Wyman:** Good afternoon. My name is Miriam Wyman. I'm a citizen of Metropolitan Toronto. I'm self-employed, a taxpayer and a property owner.

A little over one year ago I appeared before the standing committee on general government to express my concerns about Bill 8, the bill to restore merit-based employment in Ontario. At that time, I was clearly told by members of the committee that it was my right to speak but that expressing my concerns was an exercise in futility. I am again exercising my right to speak, and this time my voice is one of many thousands speaking out about the proposed megacity legislation. This time I hope it will not be an exercise in futility.

I work to involve members of the public in making decisions about projects and issues, mainly environmental ones, in their communities. I've been doing this professionally and also as a volunteer for 20 years. People are entitled to speak. We should have every opportunity to do so and we should be able to do so at times and locations that are convenient and accessible. This government has not always made it easy to participate.

I know that when people are involved in making decisions that affect our lives, the decisions are better because of our input and we're more committed to carrying them out. When we cannot have a voice in these decisions and when plans are made on our behalf, especially when we do not understand those plans, we are frustrated and angry, particularly with the people who are shutting us out.

The government's plans to foist amalgamation on people and communities in Metropolitan Toronto are wrong. They are wrong because they violate the participatory democracy that is a characteristic of life in this country, and they are wrong because the government has yet to put before us good and clear reasons for why these changes should take place and why they should take place in Metropolitan Toronto and not as part of a thoughtful and carefully developed approach to the entire greater Toronto area.

Although the newsletter of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing cites many recent reports related to restructuring in the GTA, these studies do not appear to form the basis for this proposal. Citizens of Ontario do not have credible, reliable information about the rationale for this proposal, its costs or its benefits.

From 1990 to 1993, I worked on Agenda 21 with members of Canadian non-government organizations as well as with representatives of similar organizations from around the world. Agenda 21 is the blueprint for the 21st century created by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. It promotes cooperation between governments and all the major groups in society in creating healthy environments and healthy economies.

Canada took a leading role in negotiating Agenda 21 and I was proud to be part of the Canadian delegation. Under federal Conservative leadership, Canada defined participatory democracy for the world and called it the Rio Way. The Rio Way has three defining characteristics:

Transparency: This means that how decisions are made and how goals are set are visible and understood and that the decisions themselves are clear and understandable.

Accountability: This means that responsibilities for finding solutions and achieving goals are clearly defined and that everyone knows where responsibility rests.

Inclusion: This means that everyone who wants to be involved and has an interest has the opportunity to be involved, and above all, that we can see our input in the outcomes.

What this government is doing has none of these characteristics. By contrast, this Conservative government operates in ways that are not transparent, not accountable and far from inclusive. It has in fact declared that people's input will be ignored.

I'm proud of the concern for democracy that people in Ontario are expressing in meetings, marches, newsletters and on the Internet. As a result, people around the world know that democracy is threatened in Ontario.

I'm pleased that the cities of Metropolitan Toronto have found efficient and cost-effective ways to determine how people feel about amalgamation. I hope the government of Ontario will find the wisdom to hear not only what it wants to hear but all that the people of Metropolitan Toronto have to say.

The greater Toronto area is the economic engine for Ontario. It is also the import-export centre for all of Canada. The destabilization that will result from these proposals violates local interests as well as national interests. I for one would welcome a move to create a new province of southern Ontario, the secession of the greater Toronto area from Ontario, created to be accountable to its citizens and to the government of Canada.

I am not proud of the ways this government is exercising its power. The current batch of proposals is not about business, it is not about fairness, it is not about the best use of taxpayers' hard-earned dollars and it is definitely not about what would be best for Ontario. The actions of this government reflect an abuse of power by people who in their opposition to big cities are proposing a huge city and who do not seem to understand that power can be used for good.

People who truly understand the nature of power do not impose their power on those with less power. Those who do, kick cats, hit children or beat women. True exercise of power would mean doing the best for the largest number, not doing the most harm to the largest number.

Building a sustainable future requires processes that reconcile competing interests, forge new cooperative partnerships and explore innovative solutions. These processes need to draw on the abilities of all parties and all people, not the force and power of one group, to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations. Thank you.

**Mr Parker:** You spoke at some length on the subject of the process involved in Bill 103. I'd like to ask you a question about process. What would you think of a process of a vote that's taken where the votes are collected by one of the parties that claims to have a stake in the outcome of the election and those ballots that are used in that vote are required to bear the name and address and signature of the person who's participating in the vote?

**Ms Wyman:** I think this is a veiled question, actually.

**Mr Parker:** It's not veiled at all. That's exactly the way the current referendum is being structured in the city of Scarborough. Here's one of the ballots. The ballot says: "Are you in favour of eliminating Scarborough and all other existing municipalities in Metropolitan Toronto and amalgamating them into a megacity? Yes or No." Then, "Print your name, your address and your signature." You mail it in to the city clerk's office in the city of Scarborough. What do you think of that process?

**Ms Wyman:** I think there are many situations where people have a choice between a secret ballot and an open vote, and the Legislature of this province is one of those places. It's very often very clear just who is voting and on what side of a particular issue, and in that sense this is no different.

**Mr Parker:** Is that a proper way to run a public referendum?

**Ms Wyman:** If it's an agreed-to process, yes. The point is that it be an agreed-to process.

**Mr Parker:** How about if the name and address of a participant in the vote is on an envelope and the ballot is inside the envelope and it all goes to the municipality that's running the election?

**Ms Wyman:** I'm sorry, I don't understand the situation that you're describing.

**Mr Parker:** I'm posing another question to you, not the city of Scarborough in this case. I'm posing a situation where the ballot with the yes or no answer is put inside an envelope and on that envelope is the name and address of the person who has cast the vote. That is all sent in to the municipality which is running the vote so that when the municipality receives the envelope there's the name and address of the person who's participating in the vote, and they open it up and there's the result, yes or no. Is that a proper way to run an election? What do you think about that process?

**Ms Wyman:** I think the important thing about process is that it be well known to people who are participating and that the terms of participation be very clear to everyone. In that way we can participate or not, as we choose, with clear rules.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, we've come to the end of the allotted time. Thank you, Ms Wyman, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1700

#### INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS' GROUP

**The Chair:** Would Harry Pelissero please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Pelissero. Welcome to the committee. If the gentleman with you would introduce himself at the beginning of the presentation for Hansard, I'd appreciate that.

**Mr John Bridges:** My name is John Bridges. I have lived in Metropolitan Toronto for 31 years.

**Mr Harry Pelissero:** Good afternoon. Mr Chairman and committee members, I'm here today on behalf of the Independent Contractors' Group. The Independent Contractors' Group is an organization of open-shop and unionized construction employers that work to ensure the tendering process in public sector contracts is open to all to bid and perform work.

We've been following with interest the issue of amalgamation of public sector agencies such as municipalities and school boards. The concern of the Independent Contractors' Group relating to Bill 103 is, what would happen to those municipalities that have an open bidding process for taxpayer-funded projects which merge with a municipality that does not have an open bidding process?

The following is taken from our brief, Freedom of Choice, which is attached for your information:

Metropolitan Toronto, amendment to section 39 of general conditions reads, "The Metropolitan corporation being bound by the collective agreement between the carpenters' employer bargaining agency and the Ontario provincial council, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, any work that is the work of the carpenters' district council of Toronto and vicinity under the provision of the aforesaid collective agreement shall only be performed by an employer bound by such an agreement."

When our members and their employees pay taxes, they're not identified as union or open shop. It should not matter when bidding on taxpayer-funded projects. We do not want to see the expansion of restrictive clauses as a result of amalgamation. Our goal is to ensure that there's an open bidding process.

Think of the messages this restrictive clause sends to those employees who freely choose not to belong to a union and other taxpayers. The messages are: (1) We have set up an arbitrary barrier which gives a monopoly to international unions; and (2) we're prepared to take your tax dollars but we're not prepared to allow you to work on publicly funded projects.

Imagine the unions crying foul or unfair if those same public sector agencies had a clause which allowed only open-shop contractors to bid and perform work. They would want, and rightly so, to demand fairness. This is all we're asking for, fairness in the public sector tendering process.

In closing, we would ask the committee to bring forward the necessary amendments to Bill 103 to ensure there is an open bidding process for taxpayer-funded projects in the new city of Toronto.

Thank you for allowing us the time to share our concerns with you. We'd be more than prepared to answer any questions that you would have.

**Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** Good afternoon, gentlemen. Which municipalities, by the way, have closed or open arrangements?

**Mr Pelissero:** Metro Toronto.

**Mr Patten:** Has a closed arrangement?

**Mr Pelissero:** That's correct. The way I read it, none of the municipalities that are going to be amalgamated into the new city of Toronto have restrictive clauses with respect to taxpayer-funded projects.

**Mr Patten:** Obviously your recommendation is that it be open for those open shops or union shops to bid —

**Mr Pelissero:** Both. We'd be making the same presentation if Metro Toronto had a clause that said the only way to bid and perform work would be to be open-shop or non-union. That isn't fair. We don't think that talks to the issue of fairness or the issue of equality with respect to a taxpayer-funded project.

**Mr Patten:** Just before I pass it over to my colleague, you're suggesting that this is another area in which negotiations have to take place?

**Mr Pelissero:** We hope that it's not just a mere matter of negotiations. We appeal to the sense of fairness and equality of the committee and the government.

**Mr Sergio:** Thanks for coming down and making a presentation to our committee here. Does it worry you that the government is moving in the area of privatizing as much as possible?

**Mr Pelissero:** With respect to how it affects Bill 103, or are you talking on a broader range?

**Mr Sergio:** Bill 103 and in general.

**Mr Pelissero:** On a broader range, our members really haven't come to a position with respect to the amalgamation of the six or seven municipalities into the city of Toronto. Our primary focus is to ensure that regardless of the public sector agency — and our brief highlights not only municipalities, but boards of education, provincial agencies, all that have restrictive clauses in terms of being able to bid and perform work.

**Mr Sergio:** The government, in support of its legislation, Bill 103, has been saying that this will be more efficient, will save money, will do a number of positive things. At the same time, we haven't been able to get any information from the government — any facts, any figures, any statistics. Do you think we should be proceeding with this bill at this present time or not until we have more information in our hands?

**Mr Pelissero:** Reality tells me that the bill will be passed. What you would like in an ideal world is a different scenario. Reality tells me that all you've got to do is count up the votes with respect to how the legislation is going to unfold, and the mandate of our membership, both unionized and open-shop employers, is to ensure that there's an open bid process.

**Mr Sergio:** This brings me to another question, since you may be right that this will be law according to the system of government. Do you think that the government, given the referendum and plebiscite that we are going to with the various municipalities, won't be paying any heed if the majority were to say, "We don't like it"?

**Mr Pelissero:** The organization, as the Independent Contractors' Group, has no position on that. If you were to ask me separately outside, I'd give you my personal opinion.

**Mr Sergio:** What makes you think that this is going to be law, that the government's going to approve it? What makes you say that?

**Mr Pelissero:** The first, second and third reading process, which I understand, with respect to passing of legislation. Been there, done that.

**Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall):** Mr Pelissero and your partner there, I just wondered what your opinion was on what the Premier and the municipal affairs minister promised, the big saving in dollars to the taxpayers of Metro Toronto. I know your partner said that he's lived here for 31 years, so I imagine we'd be interested in your comments on that.

**Mr Pelissero:** I guess we're going to have to wait and see, but I'll give John an opportunity to talk about the company that he runs, Summit Restoration, and how he has been shut out from being able to bid on work within

the city of Toronto, even at the Canadian National Exhibition.

**Mr Bridges:** Prior to the NDP getting power, as of four or five years ago, our company used to do a lot of work at the Canadian National Exhibition — buildings such as the Princes' Gates, the arts, crafts and hobby building, and numerous other buildings — but while the NDP were in power, us being an independent contractor, we were completely wiped out of that. I personally resented this, as I am a property owner and I pay substantial property taxes in Metropolitan Toronto. What we're all trying to do is to get things back on an equal playing field where we know the scores are equal for everybody, whether you are a union or an independent contractor.

**Mr Pelissero:** Our members, and their employees in particular — because it's not just the owners of the firms — in most cases feel like second-class citizens because they're unable to bid and perform work within their own city.

**Mr Cleary:** Do you feel that we're moving too fast on a number of these issues? I know it's difficult even to be inside Queen's Park and keep up, so I just wondered how you felt about it on the outside.

**Mr Pelissero:** Our members have a difficult time maintaining and surviving in today's economy without necessarily monitoring what's happening at Queen's Park. To a degree, that's what I get paid for. My advice to them is: Make sure that all your ducks are in line with respect to employee relations and maintaining good employee relations with your members, whether they're unionized or open-shop. The world is changing at a fast pace and you could talk about the strategy that's being unfolded, not just with this piece of legislation but with other pieces of legislation. Individuals will just have to cope in one format or another.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, gentlemen. We've come to the end of the time. Mr Pelissero, I was remiss in not welcoming you back to the Legislature. I recognize you as a former member for the riding of Lincoln riding, I believe.

**Mr Pelissero:** That's correct, and a former chair of the standing committee on general government. Been there, done that.

**The Chair:** Thank you for coming today and giving your presentation.

1710

TIM ROURKE

**The Chair:** Would Tim Rourke please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Rourke, and welcome to the committee.

*Interjection.*

**The Chair:** Mr Sutherland is taking a different time. I'm sorry, I thought that the clerk would have alerted everyone to that. Tim Rourke is in the place of Paul Sutherland.

**Mr Sergio:** When is he coming?

**The Chair:** He's rescheduled for another time. I don't know. I'd have to ask the clerk.

Welcome, Mr Rourke.

**Mr Tim Rourke:** I'm not your typical middle-class property owner; I'm somebody who's poor. I'm some-

body who's life is going to be hanging between pothole patching and my physical existence if social services come to depend totally on the property tax.

I used to be from Alberta. I came here about three years ago to get away from all that kind of stuff. It sort of followed me out here. I really love it in Toronto. It's all being destroyed now. The lesson there is that there's really nowhere to run from this kind of thing.

I have been impressed by the way resistance to it just keeps building and building, as opposed to the way things went back where I came from, where everybody just sort of rolled over and stuck their tails between their legs when the government started the thug stuff. It's invigorating to see and participate in.

I'm not going to go on about the deranged, totalitarian nature of what the government is doing with Bill 103 and the related programs that go along with it. I'm sure enough people have been down here to go over that. I think my message is basically directed at Tory back-benchers.

I have a sister who has been living in England about 20 years. She participated in the riots over the poll tax there in 1991, when mad Maggie Thatcher finally started to lose it. It took her about 12 years to finally get to that stage. It's taken mad Mike about a year and a half it seems. This is about as cracked as it gets. What happened with her was she just plain got thrown out by her own party, which realized that it had gone far enough, enough was enough, and it continued then. The government was going to lose all possible authority and it was going to become completely ungovernable and there was going to be some very dangerous instability.

The question is, where within the Conservative caucus do we have a Michael Heseltine? It's about time that Mikey came to a caucus meeting and got told that he's not the Premier any more. This is what eventually has to happen, because you cannot do this kind of thing and pretend to be a democracy.

I should also comment briefly on this business about Ms Wyman. Somebody was telling her — I believe her name was Wyman — about the propriety of the Scarborough process. Coming from anybody connected to the present Conservative Party, any questioning of the fairness of any kind of process about a referendum or about anything is a pretty sick joke.

That's about it. Question time.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Mr Silipo.

**Mr Silipo:** I just wanted to pick up on a point you made at the beginning of your presentation about the fact that the resistance to the megacity is growing. I've been in politics for about 18 years and I think I'd have to go back to some of the early years that I was involved on the school board, when parents were, as now, very upset about some things that were going on and began to get active, to see the kind of activism that we're seeing.

One of the previous presenters, I think, was implying that somehow we as a political party are fermenting or had something to do with organizing this. I wish that were true. But it seems to me that it's quite a genuine citizens' movement that we're seeing of people just saying, "This is not the way to make decisions, especially about such important things that are going to impact on us not just tomorrow but for the years to come."

**Mr Rourke:** You're NDP, aren't you?

**Mr Silipo:** Yes.

**Mr Rourke:** Well, I don't know what other people feel. Like, me, it's just a question of there's no place to run to. It's going on everywhere. At some point you've got to take a stand and fight. I think with most people, especially informed people, they've read about what goes on in Alberta, what happened in New Zealand with the old Rogernomics, and now 12 years of Thatcherism in England. They have, by now, the gist of what's in store if they don't do something about it.

**Mr Silipo:** A number of people, both presenting here and just in the general discussions and meetings that we've all been attending, have been saying more and more in the last couple of weeks that one alternative the government should look at seriously is to just decide, "Yes, there will be some changes, but we're going to take another six months to a year and try to do this properly, try to look at the other alternatives to the one-city model and look at whether there aren't other models that would make sense." Is that something you would support?

**Mr Rourke:** I'm not interested in how long they decide to take as long as they just drop it, kill it, get rid of it, period. A year later it's still going to be the same nonsense with the same object of crushing opposition.

**Mr Silipo:** But if it was six months to a year that would allow some serious discussion about the alternatives to this, and that the government was open to those alternatives, then would that process be worthwhile?

**Mr Rourke:** The government has more or less shown that it's not open to any alternatives, any time, anywhere, and they're going to try to just jam through what they want to do until they're finally — until somebody shoves back harder.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Rourke, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### BOB HARRIS

**The Chair:** Would Bob Harris please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Harris, and welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes today to make your presentation. If there's some time left at the end of your presentation for questions, I'll ask the government caucus to do so.

**Mr Bob Harris:** Mr Chairman and members of the committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to share my views with you today.

Let me first give you a little bit of relevant background on me. I was born in Toronto at the end of the Second World War and I've watched with pride the development of our city over the past 50 years. In fact, until recently, I've always felt that Toronto was probably the most livable city on the face of the Earth.

I am a former executive director of the Ontario PC Party during Bill Davis's premiership. In 1986-87, I served as project director of the parliamentary task force on child care. Currently I am a director on the board of the University Settlement House in downtown Toronto. In short, I am a Torontonian, a Tory, and I believe in a strong, viable safety net. My views on amalgamation are very personal.

In the post-war era, Toronto and the communities around the city that make up the GTA have been part of one of the world's great urban success stories. Many things contributed to this success — geography, excellent transportation routes, immigration, education — but certainly an important contributing factor was the structure of municipal government in the GTA.

As Toronto and the immediate surrounding communities grew in the 1950s and 1960s, the provincial government of the day responded with the creation of Metropolitan Toronto. As similar growth occurred in the areas around Metro, the provincial government responded with the creation of the regions of Halton, Peel, York and Durham. It is my belief that these structures, put in place 25 to 40 years ago, facilitated the orderly and effective growth and development of the area we now call the GTA.

**1720**

However, we now face basically the same challenges in the GTA that decision-makers faced in the 1950s with regard to the boroughs and cities that now make up Metropolitan Toronto. In the 1950s, the cities of Toronto, Etobicoke, Scarborough, North York, East York and York all had become part of one economic unit, and it was important for government decision-makers of the day to achieve coordination on basic issues such as transportation, planning, land use and economic development.

Today, the GTA needs the same coordination. It has become, for all intents and purposes, one integrated economic unit and there is a compelling need for co-ordination across the GTA of the same basic issues that faced the communities in Metro 40 years ago.

For me this is one of the prime objectives of municipal restructuring in this area of southern Ontario: the co-ordination of transportation, planning, land use, economic development and environmental protection within the GTA. I believe the provincial government is making the correct decision in addressing the issue of Metropolitan Toronto first.

I'm sure it has been said many times during these committee hearings but it is no less true that a strong Toronto benefits the entire GTA. Equally so, a weak Toronto hurts the entire GTA. We are part of a global economy, and whether we all like it or not the entire GTA is seen by cities and states around the world to be Toronto. That is why it is essential that Toronto be viable socially, economically and politically.

I'm here today in support of the provincial government's proposed unified Toronto. I must tell you I have come to this position slowly. Like many, I have always favoured smaller units of governance, if the units are working effectively. However, I am no longer certain that the current setup is working to the benefit of citizens within Metro.

The reason government in Metro is not working as effectively as it should is due in part to the changing world economy. Friendly competition between Etobicoke and North York or the city of Toronto was seen as healthy 15 or 20 years ago. In today's highly competitive world economy this friendly competition has on occasion become an impediment to effective economic growth.

Similarly, 15 years ago it was a virtue for municipal politicians to protect their own turf. Today, turf protec-

tion sometimes can have negative results. Turf protection can never nor should ever be eliminated, but there is a need for greater cooperation among our municipal politicians to facilitate the continued economic and social growth within Metro.

I am supporting the unified Toronto proposal for five reasons:

- (1) The proposed structure would encourage a unified approach to economic and social development within the current Metro area. With a more focused economic strategy and an appreciation for all parts of the new city, every part will benefit.

- (2) It should bring citizens closer to their municipal government because they would have a far better understanding of who is responsible for what.

- (3) I think this has been discussed a great deal and I agree with it — it would eliminate considerable duplication.

- (4) It would reposition Toronto as an effective, unified centre in the next stage of integration of common services across the GTA.

- (5) I am convinced that with the effective integration of services within the Metro area and across the GTA, we will be positioned to continue to grow and succeed as we enter the 21st century.

With economic prosperity we will have the resources we need to maintain and hopefully improve the safety net that has made living in Canada and southern Ontario so unique and special.

In conclusion, I know that there will be concerns to face with an amalgamated city, but these concerns are nothing compared to the benefits I believe can be gained for the communities within the unified Toronto and ultimately for all the communities in the GTA.

In addition, any bold new initiative requires sensitive and effective management and attention to detail. I am confident that a unified Toronto will receive that effective leadership.

I hope the committee will study the American experiences with larger urban centres and ensure that we can avoid similar experiences here. There were many factors other than municipal structure that contributed to the decay and economic decline of US cities, and I am confident that among the benefits of an integrated, unified Toronto we can maintain a strong sense of community within the city coupled with positive economic and social development.

Thank you again. I look forward to the results of these hearings and your deliberations.

**Mr Parker:** Thank you very much, Mr Harris. Your comments will come as no surprise to many of the people who have appeared before us and spoken against the megacity. We've heard a lot of people say: "You Tories, all you care about is the bottom line, you care about money, you care about something that's going to address the economic challenges, but I have a different focus. I'm concerned about my community, I'm concerned about my neighbourhood and I'm concerned that by integrating our municipal governments across the Metro-wide area my neighbourhood will somehow be put in jeopardy, my sense of community will be lost." What answer do you give to that argument?

**Mr Harris:** My grandfather was an alderman in West Toronto and represented the High Park area. High Park's still there, and he represented it in the 1920s. I live in an area called Bloor West Village. I'm three blocks over from Baby Point. I went to school very close to Baby Point. It was Baby Point in 1950; it's still Baby Point. Mimico and New Toronto, when they talked about amalgamation in the 1950s, were screaming about the fact that they were not going to exist. The GO train stops are still for New Toronto and Mimico. Nothing's changed as far as that's concerned. I think that communities within a city are natural. They will come; they will stay if they make sense; they will not stay if they don't make sense. But I think a sense of community is not the issue here; I think community will remain.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Mr Harris, it's good to see you again. It's been many, many years. I'm pleased you could come before us here. Just a brief point I'd like you to comment on, if you would: You mentioned in your address that you had worked on this consideration, your personal consideration over some time, and that you had come to this position slowly. We had Mayor Barbara Hall come before the committee and suggest, "Slow down and do it right." The suggestion was that we needed more studies, we needed more time to review, more time to go over the same ground again. Do you believe that this process — not just the current legislative process but the whole issue of municipal reform — has in fact been a long enough debate and the time to act is now?

As a second question, do you believe that the current framework of Bill 103 has afforded people enough time to formulate a position, as you have, and express it?

**Mr Harris:** I think that on one count you could say, why didn't it happen a long time ago? On the other hand you could say you can always use more time to arrive at decisions. This is the time frame the government of the day was given. Certainly it was a major issue near the end of Bob Rae's term, something that was receiving a great deal of attention, both Metro and the GTA. Again, nothing's perfect and opponents will always like more time. I'm sure the people who are trying to put it together would always like more time as well, but I don't think that really should be the issue. The issue is the benefits.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for coming today.

#### CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC REAL ESTATE COMPANIES

**The Vice-Chair:** I would like to call on the Canadian Institute of Public Real Estate Companies, Ron Daniel. Good afternoon, gentlemen.

**Mr Lorne Braithwaite:** I'm Lorne Braithwaite, president of CIPREC and president and CEO of Cambridge Shopping Centres, which is a public real estate company. David Weinberg is a member of CIPREC's executive committee and president of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Development Corp. Ron Daniels is the executive director of CIPREC.

I'd like to start out by saying up front that CIPREC members endorse Bill 103. A little bit on the background of the role and function of CIPREC so that you under-

stand that the Canadian Institute of Public Real Estate Companies is an important voice for the Canadian real estate development industry. It serves as a forum for discussion of principal issues affecting this major industry and as a vehicle for presentation of its views to the public and the government.

Its member firms include most of Canada's large real estate investment and development companies whose shares are publicly traded, plus real estate subsidiaries of public companies, large, privately owned real estate development companies, trust companies, insurance companies pension funds and banks. It's a big organization. It represents over \$50-billion worth of real estate in this country.

**1730**

CIPREC members pay significant amounts of taxes in Canada and in Ontario. The total property and property-related taxes in Canada paid in 1995 exceeded \$1 billion and in Ontario over \$600 million, of which 80% is in Metropolitan Toronto and the GTA.

Despite the past severe recession leading to the dramatically lower rents and higher vacancies between 1989 and 1994, CIPREC's annual tax survey shows that taxes per square foot in Metropolitan Toronto rose by 79% while during the same time period inflation rose only 21%. At that same time taxes went up, municipal services such as garbage collection and snow removal have been withdrawn from many commercial and industrial properties and the property owners pay private sector contractors for these services with no reduction in municipal taxes.

CIPREC believes that the property and property-related taxes are too high and have a negative impact on Ontario and Metropolitan Toronto's competitive position and the ability to attract new investment and create new jobs. CIPREC, as I mentioned earlier, supports the amalgamation of the Metro municipalities into one city. In CIPREC's presentations to all levels of government and to various commissions and committees over the past several years, we have urged the following:

(1) Removal of the education component from property tax, residential and commercial, replacing it with alternative sources of funding over a 10-year time frame.

(2) Amalgamation of municipalities in the GTA and Metro to reduce the total number, thereby creating the potential for reduced costs of governance and duplication of services. For example, in a study completed for the GTA Task Force, the Golden commission, for Metropolitan Toronto and the regions of the GTA, it was shown that there were 35 separate planning departments, 1,300 staff members and budgets in excess of \$100 million. There are more planners than there are developers in this entire region, if you can imagine. Amalgamation must be designed and implemented to provide opportunities to reduce costs and thereby lower taxes and to find ways of improving the effective delivery of services.

(3) For the same basic reasons, we also urge and support the proposed legislation to reform the education system and to restructuring the financing of education and municipal responsibilities.

Moving on, major changes undoubtedly will have some problems. Some cautionary comments we would make to

the government in this regard: Be sensitive to the need for appropriate transition methodologies and time frame. For instance, the existing assessment system has decayed for over 40 years. It cannot be fixed overnight but it can be phased in over a number of years. We note that the government has made provision to ease the burden of increased taxes for various groups of property owners and we commend that initiative.

In response to criticism concerning the possible reduction in community involvement, we urge you to not respond by cluttering the new amalgamated single city with too many community committees or boards. It will slow down policymaking and decision-making.

We urge also that in restructuring responsibilities for funding and delivering services such as welfare you provide a fiscal safety net to assist municipalities that could face program costs well above current estimates as a result of disaster or economic recession.

In summary, CIPREC supports Bill 103 but urges the government to do it right, do it now and make sure that this more efficient and less costly new government structure emerges as soon as possible.

**Mr Sergio:** Thanks for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. How do you feel with respect to the social services being dumped on the property tax?

**Mr Braithwaite:** In our analysis of that we were hopeful that the education tax would come out right across not only the residential side but the commercial side as well. We were disappointed that the education side is remaining in. We think having the administration of social services closer to the people, right at the different communities, will end up in a more efficient, more responsive system.

**Mr Sergio:** It has been said that a healthy Toronto is good for the GTA. At the same time, as you very well know, Metro Toronto is subsidizing by 20%, 30% taxes in the regions. If the system is so good, why do we still have this inequity? Why wouldn't you support that this inequity be lifted now?

**Mr Braithwaite:** We have indicated, as I mentioned in one of the last points in our presentation, that they've got to make sure they have a safety net to cover off unusual circumstances.

**Mr Sergio:** When you say, "Do it now, do it right," do you think the government should take that into consideration before it goes ahead with this legislation?

**Mr Braithwaite:** I think it has to be considered for all the areas, not just Toronto.

**Mr Patten:** On your point of taking education off property tax, I think most people wanted that because they wouldn't have to pay it; it seems to me as simple as that. But as you know, the money that's being taken off that will now go towards other services and, at least according to the figures from most of the municipalities I've read, there's a great discrepancy. You've taken off \$5.4 billion province-wide in education tax but dumped \$6.4 billion of social services on that property tax. If that's so, you're going to have increases in some of the property tax because the assessment hasn't been taken for a long time.

What do you think this is going to do to a lot of residential property taxes, let alone commercial, in the

downtown area? Are they not going to be the ones to have to pay a much greater burden of property tax in the future?

**Mr Braithwaite:** Undoubtedly they'll have to. That's why we're recommending that phase-in periods be 10 years.

**Mr Patten:** Do you think this is going to help maintain a good, healthy core?

**Mr Braithwaite:** David, you should comment as well because you have lots of experience in this area. We think you cannot let the inequities that have evolved over 40 years just bypass a major reorganization and restructuring such as we're going through. You have to figure out a way to keep the fairness in the system and you have to do that recognizing that when you've had 40 years moving in one direction and huge distortions, you've got to have long phase-in periods to correct them. Do you have anything to add to that?

**Mr David Weinberg:** The only thing I would add is that I think it benefits all the citizens of Metro Toronto if we can have a strong downtown and a strong economy in general. Our concern is that the level that taxes have reached in relation to commercial and industrial development is discouraging businesses from locating here and tending to lead them to locate elsewhere and that this is gradually making the economy of Toronto more and more difficult. I think that causes problems for the residents. I realize that in equalizing taxes under the new regime, owners of residential property may pay more. It's our view that if that can be phased in in a reasonable way and over a reasonable time period, that is reasonable to do.

**Mr Braithwaite:** I didn't mention it earlier, but copies of our brief will be provided to the chairman.

**Mr Patten:** Right now there are companies moving out of, say, Toronto proper because you get more space for your dollar and you pay lower taxes if you move out to Oakville or Mississauga or the farther extremities. Are you saying that just Metro Toronto should be the new base or that the whole GTA should have an equalization in terms of the balance between residential property tax and commercial taxation?

**Mr Weinberg:** It's our position that in principle the property tax should pay for hard services. That's a very difficult thing to do, given the amount of money involved in funding education and social services. I guess our position would be that over time that's what we'd like to move towards. In relation to localities paying their own taxes, we think it works when you're funding hard services.

When you get into larger social services and education, I think one has to take into account the fact that it may be necessary for a larger tax base to fund some of those services. It's our understanding that education is going to be funded at the provincial level now, so that's all the people of Ontario, and that social services will be funded from Metro citizens, but that there would be some mechanism to deal with potential excesses or lack of funds available to ensure that property taxes don't go up dramatically; so there's, in a way, a safety valve that would be funded by a broader population base.

1740

**Mr Patten:** It seems to me you've suggested that it should be related: property tax, property services. This bill is proposing that the soft services are really what's going to go on that property tax, which is not what Mr Crombie had recommended.

**Mr Weinberg:** Ideally we would like it to go the other way. We recognize that's a difficult thing to do immediately and we feel that the bill is a step in the right direction. Hopefully over time, as we can get more efficient in education and social services and generally have a lower deficit, it may be possible to take those services off the property tax as well.

**Mr Patten:** So we can look at an amendment on your behalf related to pushing for the hard services rather than soft services on residential property tax. We can make amendments. We still have time. The bill isn't a fait accompli, I don't think, because I know these people are listening.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing before us today.

#### HARBOURFRONT CENTRE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Nadine Nowlan of the Harbourfront Centre. Good afternoon, Ms Nowlan, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 15 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Ms Nadine Nowlan:** I'd like to thank members of the Legislature for giving me this opportunity to comment on Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, 1996. My name is Nadine Nowlan and I'm president of the board of directors of Harbourfront Centre.

At a board of directors meeting held on Tuesday, January 28, 1997, the following motion was adopted unanimously: "Resolved that authority be granted to the chair to express, on behalf of the Harbourfront Centre board, its opposition to Bill 103 and provincial downloading due to its impact on the arts and the viability of the city."

I know you, as MPPs, are all striving to improve the economic wellbeing of our province. For Conservative members it is the driving principle of your blue book.

Last January, when the Golden report was completed and made public, the focus derived from the mandate of the task force was on how best to provide direction for the future prosperity of the GTA. This is the appropriate focus. We all recognize that the health and prosperity of the GTA are the key not only to the wellbeing of Toronto but to the whole province.

Bill 103 does not meet these objectives and will work against these goals. Amalgamation will create a behemoth megacity of 2.3 million people, or half the population of the GTA. Its size would so dominate other governments in the GTA that its existence would make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to create a balanced, GTA-wide governing structure.

To collapse seven municipalities within Metro and create an entirely new structure within nine months is foolhardy. It will create confusion and uncertainty, exactly the wrong climate to attract business and investment. The downloading to the municipal property tax base that will be the net result of the megacity package

will mean severe cuts in service and/or unacceptable increases in property tax for both residents and businesses.

The livability of our cities and our investment in the arts will be the first to go. They are easy targets in times of fiscal crisis but are fundamental to the health of the municipality.

Downloading will mean less money will be available for investment in the arts and entertainment sectors. This sector is a growth sector for job creation especially in central Toronto. For example, there are now more arts and entertainment jobs in the central area of the city of Toronto than manufacturing jobs, which are in decline.

Amalgamation will mean that megacity councillors will be less accessible and have less time to work with and on behalf of arts, culture and community groups. As president of Harbourfront Centre and as a former member of city council, I can testify to the responsiveness and support of my local government to these groups. After all, Toronto's entertainment and cultural activities are predominantly downtown, and it's important to have a central city level of government to help nourish this sector of our economy. The combination of downloading and amalgamation threatens the livability of the city and the vitality of the arts.

Last November Fortune magazine rated Toronto as "#1 International Best City," and I quote: "Toronto...remains the safest city in North America. It has avoided the soulless suburbs by nurturing its downtown and lakefront neighbourhoods; desirable residential areas have sprung up, along with restaurants, galleries, clubs and lots of parkland." There are many other well-documented studies which demonstrate the importance of investment in the arts and entertainment sectors for the creation of jobs and the attractiveness of a region for investment and tourism.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing claims that Bill 103 will save money and reduce confusion about who does what. It will cost more — much more — believe me. Every serious study on costs of amalgamation confirms that big government costs more than smaller decentralized units such as we have now in our local city governments. The claim of cost savings is not credible.

Governance under the megacity will be more complicated and convoluted. The existing system within Metro is a two-tier system consisting of city government and Metro. What is proposed in its place in Metro is a confusing four levels of governance: a GTA services board, a megacity of 44 councillors plus a directly elected mayor, then seven or eight community councils with the same 44 councillors, as well as 44 appointed ward volunteer neighbourhood committees to advise the community/megacity councillors on local issues. As someone who has been a municipal councillor within the current system, I can tell you my mind boggles at the prospect of trying to relate to this proposed political structure either as a citizen or on behalf of an organization like Harbourfront Centre. It just won't work.

Megacity, with one councillor for every 52,000 constituents, has less than half the number of councillors currently in office. This will ensure that our municipal representatives are run ragged attending council and committee meetings at four levels of government. It will

also mean that we, the taxpayers, are isolated and kept away from the real decision-making power of megacity bureaucrats who with a small, powerful executive committee will be calling the shots on what kinds of neighbourhoods and city we are going to live in. Megacity will ensure that our elected representatives have much less time to consult with us, our neighbourhoods and our organizations and much less influence on decisions that will affect us.

What adds insult to injury is the proposed suspension of democracy at the municipal level. If Bill 103 becomes law, then provincially appointed bureaucrats will make crucial decisions about our city and our region's future. This is unacceptable. We have had 164 years of democratically elected local government in the city of Toronto, and we like it just fine, thank you. Bill 103, and Bill 104, for that matter, greatly offend the principles of democratic government.

**1750**

Bill Davis would not have handled things the way this government has. Even if Bill 103, with its proposed amalgamation, were a good idea — and it's a very bad idea, with no evidence to support its justification — Bill Davis would not have rammed it through as your government is proposing to do. I, along with many others, was deeply involved in the successful opposition to the Spadina Expressway. As a result, in the period from 1969 to 1985 I got to know Bill Davis and how his government worked. In his time he was criticized for being indecisive by the "Full speed ahead, damn the torpedoes" types, but believe me, development of good policy takes time, patience, meaningful consultation, a willingness to take time for sober second thought and for drawing back and rethinking. Bill Davis understood all of this.

To paraphrase Oscar Wilde, "Democracy takes too many evenings." It's true that it does take time and patience, but it's often how we get things right. The citizens of this great city have kept its governments out of trouble on many, many occasions. As politicians, you have a responsibility to listen to the voices of those who disagree with you. After all, they might just be right.

When I hear ministers of the crown proclaim that they are not going to listen to the people or pay any attention to the municipal referendums on Bill 103, it gravely concerns me.

Think about what you are doing. If Bill 103 and the rest of the megacity package is passed into law, the impact of the huge changes will be evident by the time you face re-election. The impact on the property taxpayer, the impact on municipal services, the impact on the livability of the city, the impact on municipal governance, cost-effectiveness and accessibility, the impact on social services and the impact on the arts will all be too painfully obvious to your constituents.

The way out is to withdraw Bill 103 and other misguided legislation now. By your next election, it will be too late.

**Mr Silipo:** I have a couple of questions. The first is specifically to the arts. There are some who would argue that we have got to the point now where people understand generally, at all levels of government, the importance of the arts, not just for themselves but economically

as well, and therefore, your fear that cuts in the arts would be one of the first things to happen may not be well founded. What is your response to that?

**Ms Nowlan:** If I were a municipal councillor faced with the decision between cutting off funding to chronic care hospitals or funding the arts, even though I love the arts it would be game over; I would vote to fund chronic care hospitals. It's logical. That's the order of first priority. Although arts are important for the economic climate and important for the livability of the city, there are some things that have to come first.

**Mr Silipo:** I have a question with respect to the whole process we've been going through; I've been asking people this as I've had the chance. There have been, as I'm sure you know, some suggestions made that what the government should do with this legislation is stop it, put it aside, and over a period of six months to a year engage in some serious discussions about what some alternatives to the one-city model might be and look within that at how that links into the GTA board and model. I'd be interested in your comments on that.

**Ms Nowlan:** I completely agree with you. The whole idea of amalgamation sprung suddenly out of nowhere in the middle of October. The Anne Golden commission hadn't recommended amalgamation and the Who Does What panel did not recommend it. None of the other commissions that have looked at government structures ever recommended amalgamation. The idea was just floated and then took off from there.

There are other models that I personally would support and I think others would support. The four-city model proposed by Anne Golden, strengthening local governments while having coordinating, planning and service delivery at the GTA level with an indirectly-elected GTA services board, makes a lot of sense to me. I think Golden was on the right track and I think the process got very seriously and unfortunately derailed. I don't quite understand how that happened, but it did happen.

**The Chair:** Thank you, ma'am, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

**Mr Hastings:** On a point of order, Mr Chair: I'd like to request unanimous consent to ask a question of Ms Nowlan.

**The Chair:** Agreed? Agreed.

**Mr Hastings:** Ms Nowlan, very briefly, your board of directors is made up, I presume, of many people across Metro and the greater Toronto area.

**Ms Nowlan:** Yes, we have 26 people drawn from various sectors in the community: business, arts etc.

**Mr Hastings:** Do you receive funds from Metro government, any kind of grants?

**Ms Nowlan:** We do not.

**Mr Hastings:** But have you ever in the past?

**Ms Nowlan:** We've received them indirectly in the sense that they will fund particular projects; they'll provide project funding for something their Metro arts council process is interested in funding.

**Mr Hastings:** My line of questioning is this: I'm absolutely astounded that your board takes this position when it's supposedly in the business of promoting international tourism, entertainment etc, and your focus would be less parochial than the occupation-utilization

rates of hotel rooms in downtown Toronto when there are all kinds of entertainment and other stuff of an international flavour in other parts of Metro.

**Ms Nowlan:** I think the vast majority of the entertainment sector is actually physically located in the downtown area. The customer base is the whole GTA, of course, but they are located in downtown Toronto, and they have traditionally received more support, for example, from the city of Toronto proportionately than they have from Metro, but that's understandable.

**The Chair:** Thanks very much, Ms Nowlan, for coming forward and making your presentation today. Thank you, Mr Hastings.

### WALLY BROOKER

**The Chair:** Walter Brooker, please. Good evening, Mr Brooker. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Wally Brooker:** Mr Chair and members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to address you on Bill 103. I am grateful to live in a democratic country where I have the right to be heard by my elected representatives as a matter of due course and without fear of reprisal.

I am a lifelong resident of Toronto. I was born and raised in the Beaches area and subsequently lived for many years in the west end of the city. I have worked for the past 10 years in the field of scholarly publishing with the University of Toronto Press and I'm also a professional musician.

I wish to speak to you as an ordinary citizen. Webster's Dictionary defines a "citizen" as "an inhabitant of a city or town" before it talks about country or nation. I find this appropriate because the concept of the citizen was born in a city somewhere in ancient Greece, I believe. Because of that, because of the localness of the birth of democracy, I want to talk about what local democracy means to me, about some of the content of Bill 103 and its manner of implementation in light of my beliefs about local democracy, and about the alternative to Bill 103.

I'd like the members of the governing party present to know that I appreciate the contribution that many adherents to their philosophy have made to our country, especially great scholars like the philosopher George Grant and the historian Donald Creighton. I am proud of my ancestors who came to Upper Canada as pioneers from Scotland and Ireland and England, who cleared the wilderness and settled in small towns like Woodstock, Owen Sound, Mount Forest, Palmerston and Stirling.

Like the honourable Minister for Municipal Affairs, my grandfather worked for some 40 years with the TTC; I still have his cap badge. My father was a Diefenbaker supporter. We accepted the monarchy without question. When my older brother was married in 1963, I remember that his reception toast was to our sovereign the Queen. I must say that I never fully appreciated the significance of my brother's toast to the Queen until I began to follow the debate on Bill 103, but more on that later.

### 1800

Some members of this committee may be wondering why people like myself are getting so worked up about municipal affairs that we will tramp out in the cold snow

of a Toronto winter to attend public meetings and marches. With all due respect to the commercial and financial affairs so important to the life of a city, our passion is not because Toronto is a corporation; it's because municipalities are the most basic and essential form of democracy.

My first intervention as a citizen in public affairs was in 1970, when I joined a ward 9 residents' group concerned with waterfront development issues and a proposed Scarborough expressway. It was there I learned my first practical lessons in what used to be called "civics." I learned how to participate. I learned how to run a meeting. From my local councillor at the time, I learned elements of the day-to-day business of democracy such as the letting out of tenders for public contracts and so on.

I believe the amalgamation proposed in Bill 103 will reduce the contact citizens' groups and individuals currently enjoy with their elected representatives in the six cities of Metro. This reduced contact will result in a decline in grass-roots participation, which is one of local democracy's greatest virtues.

Since the days of Pericles in ancient Athens, the city has been a laboratory of democracy as well as a centre for trade; it has been a meeting place for ideas, including the great idea of democracy. St Augustine saw the city as the embodiment of a sacred ideal. However, it has been a long, slow march, and there has not always been progress. The period of European history which we call the Dark Ages is so called largely because during that time urban civilization collapsed. I'm working up to something here; you'll see.

The revival of European civilization really began in the 12th century with the revival of the towns. It is noteworthy that Magna Carta, the document signed by King John in 1215 and rightly claimed to be the cornerstone of our British derived Constitution proclaimed: "The city of London is to have all its ancient liberties and free customs. Furthermore, we will grant that all other cities, boroughs, towns and ports shall have all their liberties and free customs."

Democracy evolved through the English Revolution in the 17th century and the American Revolution in the 18th century; in the latter, the battle-cry was, "No taxation without representation." Today a small body of trustees appointed by the minister have seized effective control of the six cities' finances at a time when a drastic restructuring of taxation is expected — by the board of trade, no less — to have a devastating effect upon the economic and social fabric of Metro Toronto. Without a provincial government commitment to respect the results of the referenda in the six cities, we are in a situation where taxes are being introduced by one level of government upon another without representation; more proof that the forward march of democracy is not inevitable.

Today the question of entrenched constitutional rights for cities is more important than ever. Soon half of the world's population will be living in towns or cities. When I look at Bill 103, so hastily introduced and so lacking in a mandate, so dubious in its promises and, above all, so undemocratic, I think of the struggles for municipal democracy in Hong Kong and the former Yugoslavia that are so much in the news these days.

I am aware that under the Canadian Constitution provinces have jurisdiction over municipalities. But I am also aware that Canadians live under an unwritten Constitution as well. We live under our inherited British common law with the abovementioned "ancient liberties and free customs," which affect communities as well as individuals. Since the Reform Act of the British Parliament in 1832, we have "the sovereignty of the people," which means that government policies and programs must be based upon principles that have been submitted to the electorate. As the Conservative Prime Minister of Britain Benjamin Disraeli observed at that time, "All power is a trust; we" — and he meant politicians — "are accountable for its exercise; from the people and for the people all springs and all must exist."

Members of the committee, I refer to Disraeli's statement because Bill 103 has no mandate; and without a mandate, there is a betrayal of that power held in trust.

On January 3, 1997, there appeared in the *Globe and Mail* an article by Toronto city councillor Michael Walker; in it, Walker declared that the future Premier Mike Harris, in response to a 1995 pre-election questionnaire submitted by the Ontario Taxpayers Federation, had stated:

(1) If elected, his party would not eliminate local municipalities;

(2) If elected, his party was "looking at favourably" the idea of eliminating regional governments, which one might read "Metro;" and

(3) Provincial public policy and financial issues are not too complicated for the average citizen to decide by voting in a referendum.

Walker's article stated, furthermore — and to my knowledge, his article has not been publicly refuted — that Mr Harris had responded to these questions on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party. If Bill 103 is not a betrayal of trust with the electorate and taxpayers of Ontario, I don't know what is.

When I read accounts of the Minister of Municipal Affairs defending the hastiness of this legislation with the insinuation that previous governments lacked the political will to effect big structural changes because elections got in the way, I wonder about his commitment to due process. I also wonder about the board of trustees which, we are told in the explanatory note to Bill 103, "will oversee the financial affairs of the seven existing municipal governments" effective on the date of the bill's introduction, last December 17.

Last month, the Speaker, Mr Stockwell, ruled that Mr Leach had acted in contempt of the Legislature in the manner of presenting brochures on amalgamation to the public. I would also like to ask, is not the replacement of democratically elected officials by appointed officials prior to the passage of a bill also in contempt? Is this not an abuse of power? Then there is clause 24, which gives the minister very broad powers indeed, and one might call them arbitrary, a clause that has already been used by Mr Leach in the order prohibiting the trustees from speaking to the media.

There is more. Clause 12(1) states, "The decisions of the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court." Clause 12(2) states, "The

Statutory Powers Procedure Act does not apply to the board of trustees."

Members of the committee, for generations the *Globe and Mail* has published its editorials under the banner of a motto from the 18th-century journalist who wrote under the pen name of Junius — and we all know it — "The subject who is truly loyal to the Chief Magistrate" — ie, the Queen — "will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures." Now I know what my brother was talking about. I implore you not to advise or submit to arbitrary measures.

Today the citizens of the six cities of Metro Toronto are preparing to cast a vote in referenda, which the minister has pledged to ignore. If such blatant disregard for the will of the people prevails at Queen's Park, I would hope and pray that the Lieutenant Governor will heed the advice she is now receiving to intervene in accordance with the crown's prerogative to dissolve Parliament and declare new provincial elections to ensure that the will of the electorate may be heard on these hasty and untested government policy initiatives.

I have focused my attention on the question of democracy, due process and the rule of law. Time prevents me from speaking on the claims of efficiency in the proposed amalgamations. However, I would like to state that there is an alternative to Bill 103. It will take more time.

**The Chair:** Mr Brooker, excuse me for interrupting, but we're beyond your allotted time. We have the brief. I wonder if you could maybe sum up and finish up.

**Mr Brooker:** Could I conclude by reading my last two paragraphs?

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Mr Brooker:** Thank you. I call upon the Conservative members to remember that conservatism is more than a philosophy of the marketplace; it's also about nurturing our communities. It is more about decentralizing than centralizing, and it's about compromise rather than confrontation. I call upon the government to respect the will of the people as expressed in their local referenda here in Metro's six cities and indeed throughout all of Ontario. If the people of Metro's six cities vote to retain their local governments, then withdraw the bill and get on with building a truly non-partisan reform of the GTA. I urge members of the governing party to demand a free vote on Bill 103. It is not right to ignore the wishes of the people.

In conclusion, I would like to offer the following words from Edmund Burke, a man often considered the founder of modern conservatism: "All government...indeed every benefit and enjoyment, every virtue and prudent act is founded upon compromise and barter." I say to the government, it's time to compromise and barter.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Brooker, for coming forward this evening.

Ladies and gentlemen, just before we recess for the evening, members have the interim summary of recommendations provided by research. If you have any questions on that, we can entertain them at the 7 to 9 session or on your own time with Mr Richmond and Susan Swift.

We'll recess until 7 pm.

*The committee recessed from 1810 to 1903.*

## ALOY RATNASINGHAM

**The Chair:** Good evening. Would Mr Aloy Ratnasingham please come forward. Welcome, sir.

**Mr Aloy Ratnasingham:** Good evening. I am presenting to you as the past president of the Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario.

The megacity move actually started in 1953 when 13 municipalities were amalgamated into a Metropolitan federation, and later reorganized in 1967 as the Metro council with six municipalities: the city of Toronto, York, East York etc.

I wish to recall the prophetic words of then-Mayor McCallum who was responsible for the amalgamation. His words were as follows: "We have adequate governments in this country and we have today a government called Metropolitan council and within years it will be changed into one unit of government responsible directly to the people." Bill 103 translates the dream of the then mayor into a reality today.

Do we require a mathematical wizard to show us savings if we have one government instead of seven? One study alone by Ernst and Young, which included only two items, fire and health services, showed a savings of \$49 million if Metro takes over these two items from the six municipalities. Furthermore, what about the savings in dropping 106 councillors and the six self-preservation-driven mayors?

Honourable members of the committee, I wish to draw your attention to the handbook published by the Metro Council, Metro and You. On one page we have the caption, "Who is responsible for what." Here we find 22 sole responsibilities of the Metro council. To name a few: police, TTC, ambulance, welfare etc. In addition, it has 15 shared responsibilities such as parks, planning, minor roads etc. The six city councils take over the leftover responsibilities such as fire protection, health services, sidewalks etc. For Metro, bigger is the reality. Already 78% of the services and taxes in Metro are amalgamated, a fact hidden in the duplication of governments. Thus we now see Metro government as the megacity in the making from 1953.

What is this referendum for? Just to transfer the remaining 22% of the services to Metro or not? Was a referendum held in 1953 or 1967 when most of the services were unified in one Metro government? Should not this anomalous situation of roads being looked after by Metro and sidewalks by the local municipalities end? Should not the fire trucks that accompany the police and the ambulance be under the same management? Should the borough of East York, one fifth the size of North York or Scarborough, with a population of one federal riding, be allowed to continue as a city? The six mayors who are leading the anti-megacity campaign should pose these simple questions to their supporters, instead of wasting funds on a meaningless referendum.

What has this question of unloading and downloading got to do with the concept of a unified city? Cannot the provincial government do all these fiscal changes without the creation of a unified city? Surely they can. The provincial government is aware of its responsibilities and it can ill afford to discriminate against a section of the

population of Ontario, in fact against the residents of the capital city of Ontario.

Transition has to be effectively managed. Housing, and seniors' housing in particular, can be transferred in stages. In short, as suggested by the Metro council, the effects of the transition have to be cost-free and revenue-neutral for the new Toronto municipality to be successful.

We have the assurances of the Premier and the minister of local government that they will look into the financial crunch, if any, of the newborn municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. Therefore, permit me to congratulate Premier Mike Harris for the bold and brave steps he is taking to unify the seven cities into one, an act that is long overdue.

Metro government, though 44 years old, failed to project itself as the main government of Metro in charge of 2.3 million people with a budget of \$3.2 billion and in control of most services in Toronto. Even though they had put up a huge building in downtown, and named it Metro Hall instead of Metro Secretariat, often when people are asked to come to Metro Hall, they end up in the well-known city hall.

## 1910

Many community organizations in existence in Metro did not know of the existence of Metro government and its functions for a long time. Undoubtedly, honourable members, Metro failed to say who does what until ex-mayor David Crombie wrote his report on unification. One of the most meritorious points in his report was the easy identification and clear-cut boundaries of the new wards of the new municipality of Toronto, the unified city. His proposal is that the wards will be patterned after the 22 federal ridings in Metro Toronto. To elect the 44 Metro councillors to the new unified city, he suggests that the federal ridings be divided into two.

I respectfully wish to differ on this one point only: dividing each federal riding into two. Instead, I suggest we leave the 22 federal ridings well alone. Each federal riding can remain as a multimember constituency to elect two councillors to the new municipality of Toronto. Then we can have a community around this federal riding, besides others, to include the federal MP, the provincial MPP and the two municipal councillors.

I am introducing this concept of multimember large constituencies, as this will provide an excellent way of satisfying the needs and aspirations of significant groups of special interests. These can be a group of minorities, visible minorities or some workers with special interests. Under this system they can pool their votes and thereby get a better chance of electing more of their own members.

At present, 24% of Toronto residents are visible minorities. They are underrepresented in all municipal councils in Toronto. As municipal elections are not contested on party lines, multimember ridings, as suggested, may be one way to ensure adequate representation of special interest groups, and in particular the visible minorities, the people of colour.

We had this system of multimember constituencies in Sri Lanka, with remarkable success. This system of election is permissible under our laws in Canada. This is accepted all over the world as a vehicle to give effective

representation to underrepresented groups. Germany adopts this system in some areas. Therefore, why not try this out in Toronto, the multicultural haven of Canada?

**The Chair:** Excuse me, sir. We're coming near the end of your allotted time, if you could perhaps sum up.

**Mr Ratnasingham:** In suggesting this change, I have a message for Premier Mike Harris and his party caucus. There is a perception among the ethno-racial groups in Toronto that nothing good can come their way from the provincial Conservatives. However, this is not the way they look at the federal Progressive Conservatives, particularly after the heroic statement made by then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney when some refugees showed up off the coast of Newfoundland: "I am the son of an immigrant. Do you expect me to send these people away?" He made this courageous statement on the floor of the House of Commons. These words still reverberate in our hearts and minds.

Here is an opportunity for our Premier, the Honourable Mike Harris, to change the existing perception of the visible minorities in Toronto by acceding to this democratic request. Declare the 22 electorates of Toronto as multimember constituencies, to elect two councillors per riding, to make the total of 44 councillors required to form the megacity, the new municipality of Toronto.

This will hasten the birth of the megacity as scheduled for January 1, 1998, without wasting much time in consultations and delimitation. Most important, this system will rightly ensure adequate representation for ethnic and racial minorities and other groups and make the new municipality of Toronto truly represent the composition of Toronto.

In concluding, I wish to say that I am sad to note that the opposition parties at Queen's Park have made a political issue of this sound proposal to unify the seven governments into one structurally strong and economically viable government. Thank you for listening.

**The Chair:** And thank you for coming forward to make your presentation this evening.

#### ROBERT ZEIDLER

**The Chair:** Would Robert Zeidler please come forward. Good evening and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Robert Zeidler:** Thank you very much. I personally firmly support cost-cutting within the Ontario government. I also firmly support the need for less government. I also firmly support the concept that there is too much duplication of services and wasted spending among the various governments within the greater Toronto area. Therefore, one would expect to hear a vote of support for Bill 103. However, you shall not. I stand firmly opposed to Bill 103, a bill whose thought process has been poor and whose execution is worse.

I oppose it for two basic reasons. First, it will not do what it has been created to do: bring better government to Toronto and the surrounding areas. Second, it has been created and is being forced upon the citizens of the greater Toronto area in a manner that shows a complete lack of respect for the democratic process upon which our country is based.

How does it fail to bring better government to Toronto? There are four basic ways. The first is that

Toronto is an exception within the North American context. In most North American cities, people live in the city because they are too poor to move to the suburbs. Yet in Toronto people buy in the suburbs because they can't afford to live in the city. This is not because Toronto is a great city. People don't live in Toronto; they live in the Beaches, in the Annex, in Little Italy or in Chinatown. Toronto has allowed itself to develop as a collection of great communities. Mega-projects do not make great communities; attention to detail does. That means making sure that the traffic lights are there for pedestrian safety and not for better commuter flow. How on earth can a group of citizens who have a concern about what is happening on their street make their voice heard when their entire ward has one vote in the new council? Our communities flourish because of local government. Bill 103 will kill that.

Second, this bill creates no incentive to save. I lived in London, England, when the greater London council was abolished and I watched services improve and the costs for those services go down. Why? Because under the new system, while it was centrally organized, the services were locally run. In any mammoth organization, no one has enough power to change anything without a lot of political alliance-building. No one builds friends in alliances with cost-cutting. Toronto will be a city where politicians build alliances by supporting each other's spending bills.

The third reason is that Bill 103 discusses the legal issues of who will have what powers and how the transition will be handled, yet I was struck by its complete lack of vision. There was no formula for success here. It merely says: "You're out; we're in. The rest we'll deal with later." There is no discussion on how the complex issues which are involved with the continued development of Toronto will be dealt with.

The fourth reason: It is ludicrous to consider such a bill as Bill 103 without the inclusion of Mississauga. This is a topic which has been totally overlooked and yet most clearly illustrates how illogical and poorly thought out the bill is. How can Scarborough be so vital to the development of a new city of Toronto, yet its direct counterpart to the west of Toronto is considered not to be? Clearly the Harris government fears the political backlash from such a true cost-cutter as Hazel McCallion.

The second aspect of this, and this is just as important as the first, is that this bill is a threat to the democratic society upon which our country has been built. While no democracy is perfect, ours does not have the system of checks and balances that our American neighbours have, because until now we have trusted our politicians to act in a manner consistent with democracy. That does not include getting elected on one platform and then, once elected, introducing new, unmentioned legislation. It does not include invoking closure because you simply don't want to hear any discussion on the issues. It does not mean announcing a bill will go ahead regardless of referendums or what the public might have to say to any committees. It does not mean stripping democratically elected officials of their power and replacing them with appointees.

1920

I should not speak too poorly about Bill 103. In one sense, it has been extremely useful. Having served on three peacekeeping missions and having patrolled the Berlin Wall, I have seen what happens when people have their democratic rights taken away from them and others decide how they will live their lives and run their governments. This has been a wake-up call to Ontarians that their democratic rights are not so self-evident and firmly entrenched. I have been thrilled to watch ordinary citizens stand up for something they truly believe in. If the Harris government lives up to its promise not to listen to its citizens, then I wait for the next election when we, the people of Ontario, will take great pleasure in throwing them, like the Mulroney Conservatives, out as a lesson to all who follow. By the way, I live in Al Leach's ward.

**Mr Hastings:** Sir, my apologies for not being here earlier, but I got your remarks about Mayor McCallion and I think you're accurate in terms of at least, to give her her due, cost-cutting. But I would like you to appreciate and hear my comments about how Mississauga really got its moneys over the years. It's not only from cost-cutting, which has come in the last few years, but primarily from what was called the old lot levy that was instituted by Mississauga city council as early as 1970. Essentially, the old lot levy was —

**Mr Zeidler:** No, no. I'm not sure if I quite understand you. The point I'm saying is, how on earth can you introduce a bill and say the east of the city of Toronto is vital, it must be part, but the west, no, that's irrelevant, that has nothing to do with the city of Toronto? That's my argument. It has nothing to do with how they got their lot levies or not.

**Mr Hastings:** It's important in the context in which Mississauga has become a wealthy city. It's primarily from two sources: The way they have taxed residential versus commercial-industrial, where those councils made a deliberate decision to tax commercial-industrial at a lower level compared to residential, whereas for their next-door neighbour in Etobicoke the reverse was true, and lot levies were the second major source of funding that the city got.

With respect to why Mississauga ought not to be included in the rationale for these proposals, there are many reasons. Primarily, Peel region and the way Mississauga and Brampton have evolved and have been developed are completely separate from the way in which Metropolitan Toronto has evolved. That is also true —

**Mr Zeidler:** I thought you were supposed to be asking questions.

**Mr Hastings:** It's true. It's particularly true with respect to taxation. So that is why — you're asking why that's not included. It does have a significantly different history and tradition, aside from the taxation issues.

**Mr Zeidler:** I'm sure East York has a different tradition and I'm sure Toronto has a different tradition, and I'm sure Scarborough has a different tradition than North York.

**Mr Hastings:** At the beginning, that's probably true in terms of how they evolved, but once the Metro federation came into being in 1953, those traditions to a great extent got watered down, whether one likes that reality or not,

probably with the exception of the city of Toronto, which wants to distinguish itself from the way in which the other five evolved.

**Mr Zeidler:** I was under the impression that I was to come here to speak and you were here to find out my opinion. I've just been lectured at for five minutes out of my —

**Mr Hastings:** No, I haven't been lecturing you. I've been pointing out some history.

**Mr Zeidler:** All right, you've been explaining something. You certainly haven't been asking a question. I thought that was the whole point: You were here to find out what I think of Bill 103; I was not here to hear what you think about it.

**Mr Hastings:** I would like you to elaborate on your specific rationale as to why you believe Mississauga and Peel region ought to be included in this overall review, in these proposals, in these amalgamations.

**Mr Zeidler:** It's very simple. I'm not entirely against a lot of the concepts in regional development, having centrally organized regional developments. It makes no sense whatsoever to just say: "This has nothing to do with Toronto. Mississauga has nothing to do with Toronto." But I think it's impossible to look at Toronto and say suddenly somehow or other Scarborough, which is vital to the growth of Toronto — I mean, why do we have Scarborough? Because Toronto has grown so big and gotten so expensive that people have had to move out to Scarborough. The exact same is true for Mississauga. All of the factors which resulted in the creation of people living in Scarborough are the exact same factors creating Mississauga. So if the Harris government is going to come to me and say, "We have to do this; this is vital to the growth of Toronto," it has to stand up and say, "Okay, it has to be done in Scarborough and in Mississauga." I just find it's a point which shows how illogical and poorly thought out this bill is.

**Mr Hastings:** Many people have suggested that the only way you can resolve the problem in terms of not having to have any sort of amalgamation is to have greater coordination. What I can't figure out, and I'm not sure what your position is on this in terms of a new unified city — it would seem to me much more rational and logical, that you could have greater coordination on cross-boundary issues, like cross-boundary transit, than you can from the proponents I hear on the other side who maintain we should be dealing with the Golden commission in terms of having greater coordination the way she proposed it, that is a supercouncil, mainly with no taxing authority; 35 members, probably even more, and you could get greater coordination. Your thoughts, sir?

**Mr Zeidler:** My thoughts are very simple. I think you cannot look at all these issues in isolation. You need to have some sort of coordination to ensure that Toronto's growth is not stifled by any actions which will hurt it. On the other hand, I think what has made Toronto strong is the strength of its communities. By amalgamating under one city, you will ensure that you will have a bureaucracy which will grow out of control and local governments which will be destroyed. The results will be such wondrous things as expressways through the middle of our city, and in 10 years we can take great pride in all of

you having protective bodyguards and protective vehicles because it's unsafe to be in downtown Toronto just as your American counterparts find in their cities.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Zeidler, for coming forward and making your presentation tonight.

### DAVID NOWLAN

**The Chair:** Would David Nowlan please come forward. Good evening, Mr Nowlan and welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Nowlan:** Thank you for inviting me. I'm David Nowlan, professor of economics at the University of Toronto and one of the university's former vice-presidents. My area of specialization is in urban and regional land use economics and in the economics of regulation, taxation and transportation. I've been a frequent consultant to all levels of government, from the United Nations down to the city of Toronto. I've consulted for Metro Toronto. I've been an executive member of the Metro planning board when it existed. I've been a volunteer member of two advisory committees to the greater Toronto area task force and a number of my publications are referenced in their task force.

I'm here to speak about Bill 103 and the significance of municipal government size. I think it's an important issue and I'd like to start with the point that if the local governments in Metro Toronto are amalgamated into a single government, the process, in my view, will be irreversible, that we can't take that omelette apart at some subsequent date. It's always possible to create an amalgamated unicity, megacity government but not possible to uncreate one. That alone, I think, would give us reason to want to think very carefully about the creation of this kind of government.

Creating a proper, useful size of government is certainly not an exact science and there are tradeoffs. There are reasons to want smaller local governments and there are reasons to want larger local governments. Frequently what one is trying to balance in this issue, which is present in many cities of the world today, what one is trying to get as a reasonable tradeoff — you give up something by having a larger government but you hope you gain something. It's important to try to have an appreciation of what we lose and what we gain when we look at the size of government that's being proposed.

Why do we want larger governments? We want larger governments — and forgive me if I sound a little professorial in doing this. I'm trying not to deal in slogans and I am a professor and I only have 10 minutes so I'll do it quickly. We want larger-scale governments really for three reasons.

One is to try to achieve economies of administrative scale. On that point, all the studies, both political and economic, clearly demonstrate that we lose our administrative economies of scale at sizes even lower than the current major local governments in Toronto, that is less than the city of Toronto, North York, Scarborough and Etobicoke.

This was demonstrated most fully in the royal commission on local government in Britain in the late 1960s. A series of academic writings in the United States have been published more recently in the 1990s, and work that

economists have done attempting to measure economies of administrative scale show that they're really exhausted in the order of 100,000- or 200,000-people municipalities. So that, I think, is not an issue in this case.

### 1930

We want larger governments for redistributive purposes. This is an issue the Americans often don't understand. In Canada we have a much greater concern about redistributing among people in our communities from the better-off to the less well-off. That's a very important consideration in thinking about the size of government. Redistribution at present in Metro takes place, as it should, as the Metro level of government. There's a very strong argument for thinking about redistribution in the Toronto area on a GTA level now, not on a Metro Toronto area. It's important that municipalities outside the core cities don't get a free ride on the social services the inner cities are providing. It's the free ride that has created so much of the difficulty in the fragmented American cities. The level, in my view, at which we should think of redistribution is at the GTA, not the Metro level.

The final reason for wanting larger governments is in order to achieve a measure of coordination for our infrastructure and our planning functions. Once again in my view, the proper level of infrastructure and planning coordination today in the Toronto area is the GTA, not Metro Toronto. It's an argument that's often made. It was at the Metro level in the mid-1950s. We're now 50 years beyond that. The region has grown enormously, it has assumed a much greater importance in the economy of this province and this country, and the region across which planning coordination is needed is the GTA.

What do we lose if we go to larger units of government? What do we gain as we think of smaller units of government? Principally we gain a responsiveness to local preferences and an ability to try different ways of delivering services and different service types across citizens in a very complex area. You've just heard that Metro Toronto and the GTA are certainly not a region where people are homogenous from a number of different points of view and that their preferences aren't homogeneous. They have different orientations towards their community. It's important to try to reflect that orientation in the scale and type of government we have. This is the sort of "reinventing government" approach. This is the reason that so much of what I interpret as the Conservative government pre-election approach favoured local government, responsive local government.

I live in the city. I've worked closely with the city and with Metro over many decades now. Within the city, one policy theme has been consistent that initially was opposed by the Metro level of government: It was seeking to intensify the residential base of the central city; to stabilize neighbourhoods and bring more people into the central city. That theme began to be enunciated in the 1970s, found some expression in the official plan of the city in the 1970s, was commented on again during the 1980s and late 1980s and finds particular expression in the current city plan. It's been enormously successful. Experimentation attempting to achieve the same end is illustrated by, for example, the Colonnade on Bloor

Street. This was the first mixed-use building in Metro Toronto. It was a bold experiment at the time the Colonade was developed. Here's a mixed-use commercial and residential, unheard of by bureaucratic planners, unheard of at levels other than the city at that time.

I was able to measure the significance of intensifying residential communities, the density of people living downtown in the late 1980s. I had a series of data that were actually from the Metro planning department, which is the level of government that had to exist to create those data. I was able to show exactly what, in terms of reduced commuting, additional people living in the central area meant, and able to calculate what the saving was in infrastructure of having that intensification. It took a long time — in fact it was only really within the last couple of years that I've been able to persuade Metro of the significance of that finding and to persuade them to adopt the same perspective the city has towards intensification — just an example of a perspective of a singular level of government.

It's an illustration as well of the importance of having a level of government that relates to the central part of this great metropolis. The Metro level, at 2.3 million people, is just too big to relate to the central core, no matter how narrowly or widely you define that core. We need a level of government that's really responsive to issues in the central core, business issues as well as residential issues.

I think that Bill 103 gets the structure of government wrong. I'm not the first to say that a single Metro-wide government is too large to be locally responsive and experimental, to deal with issues of the central city, to deal with those issues, but too small to deal with the GTA-wide issues. I fear that if we create a megacity, we'll not then later be able to create the kind of structure over the greater Toronto area that we really need at this point.

One final set of comments; The problems that I believe exist for the central part of Metropolitan Toronto that would be created by a single city are going to be exacerbated by companion pieces of legislation: market value assessment and proposed legislation on disentanglement. Many aspects of disentanglement are admirable, and the Conservative government has certainly got the right end of the stick in attempting to deal with disentanglement issues, but the net effect of downloading welfare, social housing and chronic care costs is going to be very hard not just on Toronto but on many municipalities, coupled with market value assessment.

I realize that, unlike amalgamation, many people have recommended market value assessment. The difficulty with it for the central city is that it is taxing according to location, according to value of property. Lots can be said about municipal property tax and many different ways of taxing; one isn't more fair than another. What is clear is that if you tax according to location, essentially taxing on value, which is market value assessment, you discourage the development both of business and residences in the high-valued areas. It's a fairly simple equation, and that works against concentration rather than for concentration, which is what we want. I'm concerned that Bill 103 alone, but packaged with other pieces of legislation, is

going to work against the very things that I think we all would like to see happen in Toronto/GTA.

**The Chair:** Sorry, Mr Nowlan, for interrupting you, but we've already gone a little bit beyond your allotted time. I want to thank you, on behalf of the committee, for coming forward today and making a presentation. Thank you very much.

#### KAREN McMILLAN-AVER

**The Chair:** Would Karen McMillan-Aver come forward, please. Good evening and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Karen McMillan-Aver:** Good evening. As has been noted, my name is Karen McMillan-Aver. I would like to thank you for allowing me the time to come and address this committee and explain why I am supportive of Bill 103. I'd like to begin my presentation with an illustrative story.

Thousands of years ago the first man discovered how to make fire. He was probably burned at the stake he had taught his brothers to light. He was considered an evildoer who had dealt with a demon mankind dreaded, but thereafter man had fire to keep him warm, to cook his food, to light his caves. He had left them a gift they had not conceived and he had lifted darkness off the earth. Centuries later the first man invented the wheel. He was probably torn on the rack he had taught his brothers to build. He was considered a transgressor who ventured into forbidden territory, but thereafter men could travel past any horizon. He had left them a gift they had not conceived and he had opened the doors of the world.

#### 1940

That man, the unsubmissive and first, stands in the opening chapter of every legend mankind has recorded about its beginning. Prometheus was chained to a rock and torn by vultures because he had stolen the fire of the gods. Adam was condemned to suffer because he had eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Whatever the legend, somewhere in the shadow of its memory mankind knew that its glory began with one and that that one paid for his courage.

Throughout the centuries, there were men who took first steps down new roads armed with nothing but their own vision. Their goals differed, but they all had this in common: The step was first, the road new, the vision unborrowed and the response they received was hatred. The great creators — the thinkers, the artists, the scientists, the inventors — stood alone against the men of their time. Every great new thought was opposed. Every great new invention was denounced. The first motor was considered foolish. The airplane was considered impossible. The power loom was considered vicious. Anaesthesia was considered sinful. But the men of unborrowed vision went ahead. They fought, they suffered and they paid. But they won.

In my opinion, Bill 103 is only a first step to returning power to the local level, only a first step to reordering the relationship between citizen and government. We can make government again responsive to people by cutting its size and scope and thereby ensuring that its legitimate functions are performed efficiently and justly.

I am a small business person who works and lives in the city of Etobicoke. As you are all aware, small business is the engine that is driving job creation both in this city and in this province. As a city, we should be doing whatever is possible to help the creation and the fostering of these small businesses.

For someone who is interested in opening a small business, the current system of approvals and regulations is a complete nightmare. The six municipalities have different rules on everything from how to put a sign outside your business to whether or not people can smoke in your restaurant. There are currently over 184,300 bylaws among the seven municipal governments. Once you figure out what the rules are and you get approvals from the local municipality, you may have to go through the same routine to get the go-ahead from Metro. It's a waste of time, and in business time is money.

People often say that today's municipal boundaries are artificial, that they don't mean anything. But to many small businesses they mean a lot. They mean that your business may be facing unfair competition because of the municipality you happen to be in. For example, if you own a restaurant on a boundary road like Victoria Park, you may have different hydro rates and smoking regulations than the restaurant across the street, just because the local councils made different rules. It's not fair and it's not good business.

I ask you, what major corporation has the luxury of maintaining a corporate head office with six autonomous divisions within a 15-mile radius? It's not only unthinkable; it's absurd.

Small businesses are important to the health and prosperity of neighbourhoods. They also add and respond to the unique characteristics of their community. It is important that community needs are reflected in how communities are planned and developed. Neighbourhood committees will be established to provide advice and feedback to council, and consultation will take place about other ways to ensure local needs are considered in the planning process.

A unified Toronto will have more clout internationally and will have a better chance of attracting investment to the area and boosting the local economy. That's good news for small businesses. When the local economy is strong and people have jobs, they spend money in their communities and in your businesses.

Local governments have a significant influence over how cities grow and develop. The Toronto area is seen internationally and locally as a good place to live, to work, and to visit. But the current system is faltering. You are not here to be managers of decline. Not adaptable to today's environment is a metropolitan area with boundaries that don't make sense, an area that cannot compete effectively internationally because it doesn't speak with one voice. A unified Toronto allows us to remain a diverse, exciting, friendly place to live and work. That kind of positive environment is needed for your businesses to thrive.

My father remembers the last time Toronto went through the amalgamation process. Today many of the concerns that were made at the time have been borne out to be inaccurate. We might no longer have the commun-

ities of Weston, Swansea and Mimico, but these communities still exist and thrive.

Since 1970 Toronto has become suburbanized to an extent that was rarely thought of even in the mid-1950s. Although it's tempting to consider these suburban areas as outer cities, with characteristics somewhat independent from those in the inner city, a corollary to the major theme of decentralization is that the suburbs are linked to the central city and the future of Toronto depends on a more coordinated management of all its parts, suburbs included.

In the context of the Metro-wide government, what is needed to address many of the disparities between the suburbs and the urban GTA are government policies. The extent to which these policies are possible depends not only on the willingness of governments to implement corrective policies, but also on their ability to do so. This government has that mandate and it is about time a democratically elected government made these needed changes.

It is one of the tasks of urban government to ensure that all services and opportunities over which it has jurisdiction are available to all the inhabitants of an urban area. For the last 43 years, a Metro-wide government has propelled our growth, providing emergency services and an expanding network of community and social services, and has done so smoothly and accurately; so well, in fact, that there is an inherent misconception which exists in Toronto that citizens think it's their local cities and mayors that provide many of these services. In reality, Metro regional government delivers almost three quarters of the services on an amalgamated basis right now. Bill 103 and one unified city will be able to fulfil delivery of the other quarter of the services.

We cannot forget that culture and ethnicity are profound factors in shaping cities in this part of the world. This is because the Toronto experience is the product of mobility, with people coming from many different parts of the world and bringing with them a variety of cultural backgrounds. When people settle, they move into a neighbourhood, not a ward or a municipality. Hence we have Little Italy, Little Portugal, Chinatown and Greektown, to name a few. If you haven't already noticed, these generally transcend municipal boundaries. Most social spaces within urban areas arise from the wide variety of cultural and economic attributes of individuals and households.

The profusion of local governments in the Toronto area is enormous. Although Metropolitan Toronto consists of a federation of five municipalities and one central city, there are also 94 special government bodies that are variously concerned with providing services, management, regulation and utilities. This confusing and highly fragmented pattern of local government here in Toronto is considered by other cities and countries as a bureaucratic nightmare, and almost impossible to comprehend.

**The Chair:** Excuse me. Sorry to interrupt, ma'am, but you're going to have to wind up. You've come to the end of your allotted time.

**Ms McMillan-Aver:** I believe that we will more likely notice very little change. The big change will be that the system will more than likely be less confusing.

I believe the whole issue comes down to one fundamental question, are you entitled to the fruits of your own labour or does government have some presumptive right to spend and spend and spend? It seems to me that those opposing Bill 103 would simply adopt the following philosophy: If it moves, tax it; if it keeps moving, regulate it; and if it stops moving, subsidize it.

Change is necessary. Toronto cannot continue to be great without it. Bill 103 is part of this government's commitment to continue to bring hope, growth and opportunity to the people of Metropolitan Toronto.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this evening.

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### GORDON BREMNER

**The Chair:** Would Gordon Bremner please come forward. Good evening, Mr Bremner, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Gordon Bremner:** I don't want to put everybody to sleep tonight. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the opportunity to speak this evening. I'm a small businessman in Scarborough. We're in the transportation business, we're in the warehousing business and we're in the international freight-forwarding business. If anybody wants any freight moved, just give us a call.

As a small businessman, opposition to the megacity proposal is not an issue on which I am prepared to take time during regular business hours. Consequently, I'm here tonight and I hope I don't bore you.

We've lived in the now city of Scarborough since 1967; started our own business in Scarborough in 1982, locating in a rental unit in the Morningside-Sheppard area, enjoying all of the same amenities — garbage collection, snow removal, police and fire protection etc — as we do at our residence.

My concerns here tonight include law enforcement. We had our home broken into twice during the 1980s, which necessitated our acquiring a monitored alarm system. At both break-ins the investigating officers told us they knew who the offenders were but could do nothing about it. We were advised there was not enough money for police protection in our area. We're in 42 Division. I don't know, we might have five cruisers now, maybe seven, but they don't have a lot of equipment. The other reason they gave us was the Young Offenders Act. I don't have the smarts to have a lot of knowledge about all of these rules, regulations and all of that kind of thing. I'm just saying to you we've got a problem with law enforcement.

The other area that has bothered us is garbage collection. First of all, we got it reduced. Garbage collection was reduced from twice to once per week — apparently to save money, according to the politicians — at both our business and our residence. In 1988, we expanded our business and purchased a condominium farther north and west of our previous location. We installed a monitored burglar and fire alarm system and in 1996 our industrial condominium was burglarized.

We were told again that there was not enough money for proper police protection. No restaurants up in our area, so the policemen don't go up there because they

don't get any free coffees up there. That's what was told to us and I guess we've got to somehow or another find some restaurants for the policemen so they'll get up to the north end of the city and get our police protection looked after.

All through the 1990s we paid to have garbage removed from our industrial premises that's been dumped by people on weekends, who apparently have nowhere else to dispose of their old mattresses, cement blocks, toys and everything else; a real problem in our part of Scarborough, in the industrial areas and where we live in Scarborough.

Next thing: Garbage collection is eliminated. "Businessmen have got lots of money. They can afford to get rid of everything. Businessmen can pay whatever they have to pay. Residents are the people we've got to look after." In December 1996 we were advised that garbage collection would be eliminated on December 10. In response to my letter to the mayor, he advised that garbage collection was being discontinued to all industrial establishments. After lengthy research and review, I'm leaving you a copy of the mayor's letter.

Our mayor yells from the rooftops that there must be dialogue before changes are made. Our Scarborough mayor is seeking support from the business community for his fight against the megacity while he has discontinued garbage collection for all of us in Scarborough, so I don't know where his support's coming from. Just ask one business owner when they knew discontinuation of garbage collection to businesses was being discussed at council.

**Mr Parker:** Consultation.

**Mr Bremner:** That's consultation. The reality is that almost all, if not all, business in Scarborough no longer receives garbage collection, according to Scarborough works department personnel who attended our premises. Most garbage collection to business was discontinued in August 1996 and the balance when it happened to us in December 1996.

Recently I attended a megacity meeting at my local public school. At least 50 people were there. I only saw, sat beside and talked to one member of my community and the president of the association, also a long-time resident. We've resided in Scarborough since 1967. My wife and I raised a family of three. All my local neighbours were not there. I don't know who all these other people were. I really don't know, honestly. Who were these other people? I never saw them before. We've lived and raised three children there since 1967. Quite honestly, I haven't talked to many neighbours recently because of the cold winter and working at our business, but I suspect that their non-attendance mirrors my position. They are happy with the proposed changes.

Who supports the government's initiative? My neighbours did not attend the megacity meetings held in our local school. Does it mean my neighbours are not interested or does it mean that as paying property owners they agree with the provincial government's actions? Who wants a continuation of this dog-and-pony show the local politicians are orchestrating? Who wants the mayor of Scarborough, a former Liberal provincial member of Parliament, spending our money running a so-called

plebiscite, and what is a plebiscite? An expression of the popular will. We don't need a popular will on this. It's garbage. If people are not interested and don't participate in the mayor's plebiscite and the totals are in favour of the status quo, what does that mean?

Our local Metro councillor published the results of his survey, which indicated a vast majority in favour of the megacity, but what was the number of responses in relation to the number asked? What does it mean or not mean? Who legitimately opposes the megacity issue? Not the local politicians; not the opposition; not the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto.

If they are legitimate, what are their alternatives? The issue has been studied to death. Opponents seem to attempt to add some legitimacy to the opposition of the megacity issue because apparently the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto opposes this issue. Let's examine their motives. Just like other cities, we have a Scarborough chamber of commerce. Who is the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto speaking for? The business and property owners of the city of Toronto who will be charged the same tax level as every other business in the surrounding cities have been paying for years.

Today at our condominium we, like most businesses in Scarborough, are paying our realty taxes, in our case \$12,000 for 9,400 square feet of warehouse space — it used to be \$16,000 before we appealed — paying to have our garbage removed, which used to be part of the cost of our realty taxes. In addition to that, we pay business taxes and, like every other resident, pay hydro, water etc. What are we paying business tax for? What are we paying realty taxes for?

The megacity proposal is a business decision. As a businessman, common sense tells me the megacity proposal will result in less cost to the taxpayer; fewer politicians — less cost; elimination of duplication — less cost; financial responsibility — you mean to say we're finally going to get these politicians, put our finger on them and say, "Guys, you're not increasing the taxes. You can't blame it on Metro. You can't blame it on Ontario. You can't blame it on Ottawa." Hopefully, we're going to have them right where we want them and when we have them right where we want them, at last we're going to have one city, Toronto.

Interestingly — I know you people have been sitting here and I apologize for taking your time — if we had put together all of the financial and human resources that we have used up here into job creation, everybody would be back to work. There's an old saying: If you're hard at work rowing the boat, you're too busy to rock it. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Bremner. You've used up exactly your allotted time. Thank you for coming forward to make your presentation tonight.

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### CLIFF FLAHERTY

**The Chair:** Mr Cliff Flaherty, please. Good evening, Mr Flaherty, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Cliff Flaherty:** My name is Cliff Flaherty. I was born and raised in the city of Toronto. I own my own business and I have actively participated in the Toronto

business community for over 30 years. I, like a great many of my business associates, am very concerned about the circus atmosphere that's been created by some special interest groups regarding the amalgamation.

The process that seeks to reform government is not unique to Toronto. The search for ways to make government more efficient and less costly has been going on for many years in all centres around the world. There are 19 mega-metropolis areas in the world, and from a global perspective, these centres are designated as the world's true megacities because they have a population of more than 10 million residents.

An important fact that I found out in my research on megacities is that their neighbourhoods are flourishing, crime is no more a problem than here in Toronto, and the municipal costs are lower. So it's easy to understand when I tell you that governments like these continually search for ways to reduce waste and duplication and lower the taxes, and we should be no different. The trouble is that we in Ontario were left behind in meeting these challenges, and now we are just beginning to deal with some of these restructuring issues.

To give this process some perspective, it's worth reviewing that in preparation for the last election, business people like myself were asked what were their serious concerns with the government. They wanted government to get out of the way of their business, to deregulate, to simplify and do what it could to return the province to responsible fiscal management. At the same time, the residents said they wanted to eliminate waste, duplication and overlap and to reduce the taxes. We do not need every layer — federal, municipal, quasi-governmental bodies, regional, municipal and school boards — that we now have. We must rationalize the region and the municipal levels to avoid the overlap and duplication that now exists.

Toronto is recognized as one of the most vibrant cities in the world and among the best to live in, to work and to raise a family. It is also the driving force behind Canada's economy. Most of us recognize that a single Toronto means savings for Metro taxpayers. Polls indicate that greater percentages of residents support a unified city, and even Metro council favours the obvious savings that can be realized from having one unified city.

In fact, up to \$865 million over three years could be saved by having one government for the city of Toronto instead of the current seven. My research tells me that Metro will realize \$40 million a year in savings because of changes made to the welfare system; another \$100 million will be saved, because that's how much we're wasting on property tax appeals; \$65 million will be saved annually through the shift of education costs to the province; and \$200 million was the amount of savings identified by the six Metro mayors since this process began.

To ensure there are no financial glitches, I'm told there is a \$2.5-billion fund available to assist in the transition. That \$2.5 billion breaks down in the form of a \$1-billion reinvestment fund, an \$800-million capital and restructuring fund and a \$700-million social assistance fund.

We must have a simplified, equitable arrangement between the province and the municipalities. In exchange

for removing the spiralling cost of education from the property tax bill, local government will control services that it makes more sense to have delivered locally. By integrating the delivery of these at the municipal level, the taxpayer receives a higher quality of service at less cost.

Many residents are concerned that the downloading of social costs will spiral costs upwards. I believe this will not be the case, and quite frankly, a lot of high-decibel complaining about this is nothing more than fear-mongering. As has been noted, welfare costs have dropped dramatically in the last year, and with proper programs in place there is no reason to believe they will suddenly balloon out of control again. Those who believe these costs can't be controlled give little credit to the abilities of their local representatives.

On the question of referendums, it is too bad that there has been such confusion about this process. I believe the confusion centres around the various referendums that are planned. The question is, how can they actively reflect what residents feel about the proposal? They are nothing more really than opinion surveys. Referendums really don't work when it comes to improving the delivery of government services. Referendums are great for issues like beer in the ballpark or whether we should allow sports on Sunday, but to ask a resident, "Yes or no, do you support the unified Toronto?" is really only asking, "Do you want the status quo or not?" It leaves no room for most residents who genuinely feel they must look for ways to reduce waste and duplication in government.

Looking from outside Canada's borders, as I do in my business a great deal, no one knows where North York, Etobicoke, East York, Scarborough or York are located, but they recognize Toronto. A unified Toronto will attract more investment, boost the local economy and create jobs. It will allow Torontonians to speak to the world with one voice and put an end to lost opportunities.

I believe that if Toronto had been a unified city, we wouldn't have lost the Olympic bid to Atlanta. We would have been able to prepare a much stronger proposal as a unified economic, business and cultural centre.

A unified Toronto will enhance neighbourhood input because people will have input into decisions through the formation of neighbourhood committees. Volunteer bodies will advise the new city council, and that means more accountability at the local level.

It is worth noting, as was recently written in a Toronto Star editorial, that 72% of services in Metro are already delivered region-wide, exactly as they would be under the new proposal. The Toronto Star added that this system has quietly gone about keeping the metropolitan area ticking, but all the while there has been a common misconception: Most residents still believe their local cities and mayors provide the ambulance, the water, the TTC, the police, the hostels and the day care.

In the Toronto Sun yesterday there was an interesting article, and I quote:

"I was reading recently where a committee recommended expansion of the metropolitan area far beyond the present.... This group wanted to go east to Port Union, north to Aurora, northwest to Brampton and west to Oakville.

"The proposed governance was quite radical and lean, with each powerful commissioner looking after several things, such as health, water and sewers."

Excuse me, the Toronto air has given me asthma and I have a little trouble sometimes.

**Mr Silipo:** Unified air too.

**Mr Flaherty:** Bring some in from Hamilton maybe.

"I tipped my hand by that mention of Port Union, now remembered just as a big road. The clipping was from the Evening Telegram of September 3, 1913. But then there are those who say, hey, we've got plenty of time, why rush into this? Let's take another year, or even 80."

In closing, I would like to just make a point for you folks on the committee. I know you have been very busy listening to all sorts of deputations, but I would just like to say that you were not elected to manage an out-of-date system; you were elected because you're the leaders in your various ridings. You have been given a mandate and you will be evaluated at the next election. I wish you every success and I encourage you to please get on with the job.

I support this bill.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Flaherty. You too have effectively used up all of your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this evening and making your presentation.

## 2010

### GREGORY SOKOLOFF

**The Chair:** Would Gregory Sokoloff please come forward. I hope I've pronounced that right, sir.

**Mr Gregory Sokoloff:** Perfectly, thank you, Mr Chairman.

**The Chair:** You have 10 minutes this evening to make your presentation. If there's some time remaining at the end of your presentation I'll ask Mr Colle from the Liberal caucus to ask questions.

**Mr Sokoloff:** I'll try to break with tradition and leave some time.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to express my opinions on Bill 103. I'm a businessman and a resident of Rosedale in Toronto and, to be more specific, I work in the computer software sector. In my career I've worked for big companies like IBM. I've started up successful new firms and I spent a better part of a decade as vice-president in one of the largest software firms in the world.

I have, in my career, made decisions about whether to place jobs in Toronto or to move them to the United States. Today I'd like to address Bill 103 from my personal experience. I'd like to look at one aspect of it. I don't think it's the most important aspect, but nevertheless it might be interesting to you folks, and that is the effect the bill would have on the software industry in my opinion. I think this might also be interesting to the government members since I believe they would like strongly to promote industries like the software industry.

Before beginning, let me just state a couple of assumptions that I don't think are very controversial. The first is that the primary benefit of having high-technology industries in Ontario is the high-wage jobs they produce

and all of the attendant benefits of high-wage jobs. They bring a lot of money into the consumer sector, they promote local investment, and of course they produce larger tax revenues under our progressive tax scheme which can be used to fund social programs. I think both sides of the House would like to see more of these kinds of jobs created in Ontario.

The software industry tends to have a very high proportion of high-wage jobs since the major costs in the business are for the engineering staff salaries and for marketing and sales. Another benefit of high-tech industries of course is that they tend to be very much export-driven. Domestic markets tend to make a small proportion of their total revenues. This, of course, helps the balance of trade and has many other economic benefits.

The second assumption I would like to state is that you can develop software successfully anywhere that you can convince engineers and managers to live. You will find software firms of various sizes all over North America in the most surprising places. The key factor is whether you can recruit and convince people to live in a certain location. There are other factors, but I think that is the most important factor.

Now let me proceed to my main argument. I believe that Toronto has three competitive advantages in attracting these kinds of jobs.

The first is education. Ontario has a number of universities like the University of Toronto and the University of Waterloo that have world-class computer science and engineering programs, and the graduates from those programs are sought after by firms all over North America. They're very actively recruited. I know because I've been in competitions to recruit these individuals against companies from all over North America, like Microsoft, and companies like Microsoft are successful in luring a certain number of these candidates to move out of the province.

The second comparative advantage of Toronto is its cost structure. Ever since the Canadian dollar dropped into the 70-cent region, Toronto has been a cheaper place to develop software than comparable locations in the United States. A couple of years ago an accounting firm did a detailed study on this and the bottom line, as I recall, was that it was roughly 17% cheaper. That was a very complicated study, but the net effect for the life of a firm was 17% less expense. That's primarily due to lower wages once you translate the currency.

The third comparative advantage of Toronto is the amenities. The quality of life in Toronto attracts and retains engineers and managers. I don't need to go into listing these ingredients. You've probably heard them a million times from all the deputations here. I'll just say the good schools, low crime rate, cultural offerings and so forth make for a place where people want to stay.

I want to emphasize that these are not theories of mine. I just bring these points up because I've actually had personal experience of them. At one point in my career I was given the choice of locating a growing development organization in Seattle, moving it to Seattle from Toronto. It was my decision, it could work either way, and I chose to keep it in Toronto because I like living in Toronto and I thought Toronto would help to make this operation

successful. I thought I could attract top-quality engineers and I thought I could retain top-quality management and build up a very good team.

To the extent that government policy strengthens the comparative advantages of education, cost structure and amenities, I believe the software sector and high-tech in general will add more jobs to the GTA. Conversely, to weaken these advantages I believe will shortchange us of good jobs.

I don't think anything I've said so far leads automatically to support or opposition to Bill 103. In fact, I was hoping that by now some of you would be on the edge of your seat wondering which way I was going to go. I guess I succeeded. Let me state a couple of concerns I have about Bill 103 that I would be interested in hearing the government address.

The first concern is that the downloading of social costs to the new Toronto has a good possibility of increasing the cost structure for doing business in Toronto through higher office rents and higher housing costs, residential housing costs. At the same time, I believe the 905 area will become too cheap to pass up by comparison and more companies will move up there. If you go up to Richmond Hill today you'll find a very quickly growing community of high technology firms like Compaq and so forth. If the only cost-justifiable place to locate is outside Toronto, then why not locate just as easily in an American suburb. Richmond Hill loses some of the comparative advantages that Toronto has.

My second fear is that the cocktail changes proposed by the government will hurt the quality of life within Toronto. My concern here is mostly based on the government not adopting the priorities of the Golden report and the Crombie panel of providing a GTA regional government first, then tackling amalgamation or some degree of municipal reorganization.

Having expressed these concerns, I must make one unequivocal point. The government has not made a remotely convincing case for its plan. Even if it's a good plan, it has not done a good job of convincing many people that it's a good plan. If I had a marketing department in a corporation charged with selling the virtues of Bill 103 and the sibling bills, and they had in three short months provoked the ire of every conceivable expert, natural ally and a good number of normally docile citizens without, as far as I can see, winning many converts, I would have invited whoever was in charge to a great career in another company.

Does the government sincerely believe that the sweeping changes it proposes will indeed benefit the GTA, despite the fact that it seems unable to argue its case effectively? Or, more sinisterly, is the government competent but insincere, intentionally dividing to rule by writing off Toronto in the belief that it will gain support from the rest of the province? I don't know the answer to this question. It's maybe the most intriguing political question I've seen from a tactical point of view in the last decade.

However, I will say until I see a convincing case that the path the government is on will not lead to Toronto becoming another American-style city, as its critics contend, I will be voting with I imagine the majority of Metro residents against the megacity.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you. We have one minute remaining. Mr Colle.

**Mr Colle:** I could give that to the government side. They would maybe like to answer Mr Sokoloff's question.

**The Vice-Chair:** Go ahead, Mr Hastings.

**2020**

**Mr Hastings:** One of the major justifications, in my estimation, for amalgamation is tax competitiveness. If you look at Statistics Canada studies, we are the tax champion of the western world, no doubt about it: 4.1% of gross national product is taken out by property taxes, compared to the United States at 3.1%, Germany at 1.1%, the UK at 2.1% approximately. Those are my recalls of the statistics.

Given that situation, that is a terrible inhibitor, I would think in your estimation, to job creation, which you've alluded to, and that's one of the fundamental justifications for the bill in my estimation. When you have a non-competitive tax situation like that, then you must do something about it. Whether you do not like the fair tax system, MVA, AVA, unit value, the existing property tax system in Metropolitan Toronto is fundamentally broken. It's a job inhibitor, and I would think, from your perspective as a businessperson, that in itself would be one central thing that you would take into your consideration before you cast your ballot in whatever city you're in within Metro from February 27 through to March 3.

**Mr Sokoloff:** I think you've raised a number of complicated issues. As far as the overall tax regime and how it affects business, of course you can't treat property tax in isolation. From my reading, in the Economist anyway, Canada places somewhere in the middle of the pack as far as overall taxes go, if you take into account all of the taxes involved.

Nevertheless, the main point I made was that if you look at the overall cost of doing business, right now Toronto is more competitive than the United States, based on the current tax regime. What I object to, and I've had to justify this in front of corporate executives in the United States, is the fact that there is a big differential developing in office rents between the city and the surrounding area, and I believe this is going to have a deleterious effect.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry to interrupt. I realize you're into a very complicated discussion here, but we're well over time. Thank you very much for presenting here this evening.

#### NICK EGNATIS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Nick Egnat. Good evening and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Nick Egnat:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I'm happy to be here. I'm sorry but I don't have anything to present to you that's documented in evidence as an expert. A neighbour of mine was supposed to be here and I'm taking his place. What I have to say to you will come as a private citizen and it will come from the heart.

I first came to Canada in 1948. We lived at Queen and Coxwell. After that, we moved to Broadview and Danforth, then we lived at Mortimer and Greenwood in

East York, and currently I'm in North York. I've had businesses in every section of the city. I have a sister buried in Prospect Cemetery. My father and mother are buried in Pine Hills in Scarborough. In my opinion, I think you're behind me. This is my city and it's not East York and it's not Scarborough and it's not North York, even though Mel Lastman would not like to hear that. This is my Toronto. I'm proud of it. If I thought that what you're trying to do was wrong, I would say it is.

I'm also a small businessman and in my particular business — I'm a real estate broker — from time to time I appear in front of councils, of which I'm sure most of you are aware. My father and I bought a property in Scarborough in 1965 and I tried to develop it. Let me tell you, I was discouraged from the outside by the janitor when I walked into the planners because they figured I'm the owner and I'm going to bungle it and I'm going to spoil the neighbourhood. They tried every which way from Sunday to discourage me and I said: "I bought it. I'm going to develop it and if you don't deal fairly with me, you've got my three sons coming after me," but I'll tell you, it's impossible to do anything.

I plead with you, because you're all in positions of responsibility, and I'm not talking about one side or the other; all of you are the same in this respect. It's impossible for the small man to compete. There are so many rules, so many regulations, so many professionals, so many studies, so many referrals, that you're making it a game for the big man only. What happens is that the small people pay, because there's no competition.

I opened a restaurant with my father in West Hill in 1960. There were 160 to 170 builders who used to come for coffee in the morning. A builder right now is afraid to touch a lot because he doesn't know if it's going to take him two days, two months or 20 years to build. If you go to the banker and you can't give him an estimate of time, you won't get the loan, so it's impossible. I'm getting away from what I came here for.

I just wanted to let you know that when you make all the rules and all the regulations to catch everybody, a lot of innocent people get caught in that big net. It's the little guys who create the jobs. I'm a little guy today. Some people think I'm a developer and they put a big title on me, but I'm not embarrassed to tell you that I still work seven days a week. If you want to come and see me on my site, you can; you're welcome.

Am I in favour of less government? You want to believe it. Am I in favour of taking shortcuts? No, I'm not. Am I in favour of protecting the environment? Yes, I am. I have three children, I have grandchildren, and I want to leave a better place for them. But I want to have even rules. I don't want the guys in front of me because something happened to waltz through but I have to comply with it. It should be even for all.

**AVA assessment:** In my business, when I take a young couple through a town house in Scarborough or in other parts of town and they have to pay more taxes than someone living in a large house, that's not fair. I'm advocating that and it's going to cost me personally more money, but there's got to be fairness in the system. Just like you, we've got to practise what we preach. Fair is fair. I also have very deep feelings that I don't think

someone who has worked all their life should be under adverse conditions. I have a client in East York in Parkview Hill. His taxes are more than what he built the house for. I don't think that gentleman should be forced to go out of his house; I'm not coming from that address. But I think fairness should be in the system.

School boards: The property tax not being on the education bill I'm very strongly in favour of. Welfare, public housing, non-profit housing — I don't think they belong on the property tax bill. In my opinion, even if the tax bill were to be smaller, judging from the public I serve, there would be too much anxiety and too much worry about not being able to budget and foresee and know what their tax bill would be next year. People are already worried right now. Sometimes there's not the right impression out in the marketplace. To some people, a home is more important than other things, and just because they have a better home they don't have a bigger income; they sacrifice in other areas in order to stay in the home. Using the home for this end of the government on the property tax, I don't think I can support that.

Having said that, as a businessman I also don't believe in saying to my son or a member of my family: "Here, son. Here's my credit card. You go and spend it, and for every dollar you spend, I'll pay 80 cents." I like to have control of the card, so maybe if the government wants to have some kind of control, that's something for you people to figure out. That's what your job is.

There's something else that bothers me as an individual that I have to let you know. This is my first visit to this building ever since I came to Canada. I'm not normally a political animal. Maybe it's because I'm older — I don't want to repeat myself — but I want to leave a better place for my kids and grandkids. I'm getting a little bit tired of special interest groups just pounding and pounding and pounding away. I don't begrudge them in what they're after or for promoting what they want, but please respect my rights too. I've voted for governments that got elected; I've voted for governments that got defeated. I always obey it.

As a matter of fact, one of the things I'm very proud of — I don't think there are better people than Canadian people in the fact that I just can't stand having the Bloc as the opposition, but I cannot respect Canadians more for allowing them the democratic right to be the official opposition until they get voted out or whatever happens. That's a beautiful system that we have and it's to be admired. I know in other places in other parts of the world they wouldn't have that. I really admire that. I say again, I don't disrespect the special interests, but please don't speak for all of us, because you don't speak for me. I don't like to see my city close.

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I've been a small businessman all my life. To me, even to a multimillionaire, a customer is a customer and you look after them. If you don't want to look after them, close your door. But it's not someone you disrespect.

I used to take my children, put them in the car and go skating at Nathan Phillips Square. I've gone skating in the Scarborough Town Centre. I live at Victoria Park and Sheppard. I do more business and have more friends in Scarborough. North York is where my address is. I have

a lot of connections in Scarborough. I can't understand what the big difficulty is. This is our city. What is the problem?

I hear experts coming from all over the place. I'm doing a project in Highland Creek. I have people there from all over the place. We're crossing borders. Mr Gilchrist over there, I'm around the corner from him, but he doesn't know it.

It's our city. Please take care of it. We all want to make it better. One thing I always say: Who's bringing these reforms in? Well, we know who's bringing them in, so if all of a sudden my taxes go higher and my clients' taxes go higher, in the next election I'll get off my fanny and I'll start to work and I'll elect somebody else. It's very simple.

Thank you very much for listening to me.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here this evening.

## JAMES WADDELL

**The Vice-Chair:** Is James Waddell here, please. Good evening, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr James Waddell:** To the Chair and to the members of the committee, thank you for providing the opportunity to speak to you this evening.

I will begin by commanding the official opposition and the members of the third party for their determined and effective efforts at holding the government to account both here and in the Legislature. This is one of your roles in a democracy. I'd also like to thank the numerous deputants who preceded me. In the main, they have been sincere. They addressed many of the feelings we all share when reconciling the need for change with the difficult tradeoffs which come with it.

To the women and men of the government, I bring thanks and commendation for your efforts to re-establish rational governance, integrity and common sense to the provincial domain. To Messrs Gilchrist and Leach particularly, my household apologizes for the ill manners and near slanders which have been visited upon you. These have come from less-than-well-meaning citizens, some of their municipally elected representatives and particularly the doubly left-footed visionaries of previous electoral fame and folly whose timeless charm, when outflanked and outmanoeuvred, is to respond with that age-old cry to man the barricades, fill the trenches and fight the good fight once again. The insolvency of these so-called reformers and activists is encapsulated in their arguments. What is most glaring to even the most casual observer, though, is that the group that once stood for change, progressivity and responsiveness now asks us to revolt for the status quo. But on to the issue of amalgamation and the facts as our household sees them.

The current system of municipal government highlights the degree to which Canadians are the most overgoverned democratic nation on earth. At the municipal level, we have a proliferation of organizations which address the needs of narrow interest groups, with minimal accountability back to the elected officials who advocated them or to the taxpayer who pays for them. This is a divisive process for taxpayers, who turn off, tune out and stop voting. Your bill, as proposed, will lead to less govern-

ment; it will refocus much-deserved attention, accountability and broader participation at the municipal level.

Much has been made of the issue of accessibility. Speaking as a resident of Toronto, I find the issue primarily moot, based upon the following simple numeric reasoning: I currently have a municipal councillor serving approximately 40,000 people and a Metro councillor serving approximately 90,000; after amalgamation, my councillor will serve 50,000 people.

The numbers speak for themselves. A 25% increase in constituents will not diminish accessibility. In fact, the decrease in the size of a Metro constituency by nearly 45% may lead to more accessibility to that level of government, which, it is proposed, will spend 100% of the municipal revenue. Understanding that money is the grease that makes politics function leads me to believe that the guys and gals at the new level of government will be making themselves pretty accessible.

Accessibility is also a geographic issue. Again, as a Torontonian I have little to complain about when it comes to the proposed changes and how they relate to accessibility. The worst-case scenario is that my municipal government moves two or three blocks to the west. No, I guess the worst-case scenario is that they might dream up another Metro Hall. I am confident that the new government can and will find innovative ways to deliver governance to all of us.

As an aside, the suburban vote at Metro has had an absolute majority over the urban core for some time now. There is little evidence which shows that Toronto proper has been ill treated during this time.

I would now like to address some of the elements of this debate which have raised, or perhaps lowered, the level of discussion to rhetoric, hyperbole and cliché, so what better way to start off than with a cliché?

Just as big is not always better, small is not always beautiful. Nowhere is this more evident than in Toronto. While we have much to be credited with for responding to people and soft issues, we have been markedly negligent in delivering the hard services which are at the core of municipal government. From the embarrassing ratio of management to hourly staff, to the featherbedding within parks and recreation, public works and sanitation, we have not delivered value for money.

These disparities in effectiveness are not, as our council weakly suggests, because our population doubles in size daily. While perhaps not doubling, each of our sister municipalities and borough experience the same phenomenon every working day. Does this explain twice-weekly garbage pickup in some areas, publicly shovelled walks in others, and recreational facilities every bit our equal and programs often exceeding our own in quality and quantity? I think not.

Like other presenters to this committee, I too had wished to bring a few props, namely, my property tax bills. My residential property bill is \$2,400 per year for a semidetached home of 2,500 square feet. A multi-unit dwelling I have an interest in, with units approximating 800 square feet in area, pays more than \$1,700 per unit. The ratios are progressively odious for commercial strip developments and multifloored commercial buildings. I thank Mr Seiling of the hotel and restaurant association

for reminding me of the tax liability per room burdening the job-creating dynamism of his industry.

Listen to my council: The true democrats defend democracy and taxation without representation. When I hear the Toronto council on this and many other hard-service issues, I hear the distasteful sound of simultaneous sucking and blowing, which brings me to a second core responsibility of municipal government, namely, careful nurturing of the residential and commercial tax base, with particular emphasis upon the central business district. Since 1985 our council has completely lost its compass on this issue. Whether it be Ataratiri, development of the docklands, the rail lands or Cathedral Square, succeeding councils have managed the dubious distinction of choking off meaningful expansion of the tax base on some of the most desirable land in Canada; its development could have been done at private expense and risk. 2040

Providence does smile upon us again, though, because these properties now represent the most modestly priced commercial real estate in a rapidly globalizing world. I ask you, is a city of Toronto council the best level of government to be managing the progress of this region, considering that they gave us an executive golf course in place of a mixed-use, privately funded development? Is an inward-looking city of Toronto council which continues to dither over unshackling a proven job creator, namely the Island Airport, the best level of government to be nurturing the progress of a region?

The facts speak for themselves. Toronto has a long-term debt approaching half a billion dollars and hard infrastructure, pipes, roads and sewers crying out for repair. Our rival for development, Mississauga, has zero debt and a reserve fund of half a billion dollars. Our prospective amalgamates also have good balance sheets. A few more convention centres, racetracks or casinos are not the answer to the revitalization of the central core or the region; I know that renewed private capital investment, fully at risk and not backstopped by any level of government guarantee is. I believe that the majority of these opportunities have wider implications and require a single level of municipal governance to realize the vision rather than just the platitude of being a world-class city.

A number of reports concerning amalgamation have focused on the potential for hard dollar savings. I analysed the mayors' and Metro's effort and was doubly amused. I have also read the KPMG report and Professor Sancton's contribution. The salient point is that arguing about how much or how little savings is a mug's game. Mr Cox provided the most important element to realizing savings in this amalgamation when he stated that the only way to get hard dollar savings is through the mandatory tendering of municipal services. My conclusion: I believe that the forecasts of savings represent the tip of the iceberg. Please include an amendment requiring mandatory tendering of municipal services in this legislation.

I had thought of closing today by pointing out how similar much of the No rhetoric is to the type of argument we hear from separatists in Quebec. I probably would have had some pretty good parallels: a group which funds only one side of the debate; leaders who mix facts, misrepresent numbers and constantly shift their

position based upon the latest hot button from the latest opinion poll or focus group. But I will not; I wish to end the way I began, with congratulations and a short, sincere apology.

The commendation goes to the current government. Any group that has the political will to skewer all of the sacred cows in Ontario has intestinal fortitude. The braying from each respective sector also speaks mountains. You men and very able women are on to something here. Continue your good works. Leadership has pitfalls, but in the norm it is duly rewarded.

My apology is to the borough of East York. As a small municipality competing among behemoths, you have displayed nimbleness, innovation, parsimony and accessibility. Amalgamation, I agree, is an unjust reward for you. I would ask the committee to include two alterations to Bill 103 and title them the East York amendments. The first alteration would see that the steering committee for the design of the proposed local councils would have a designated member from East York in its composition. The second alteration would mandate that the cost of general and administration in the new, unified municipality be capped at 8% of gross revenues.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Waddell. You've used your allotted time to the fullest. I want to thank you for coming and making your presentation before the committee this evening.

#### RICHARD STREN

**The Chair:** Would Richard Stren please come forward. Good evening, Mr Stren. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Richard Stren:** Thank you very much for giving me the chance to address this committee. I'm speaking as an individual and as a local taxpayer in Mr Leach's riding, but I have a long history and experience in the urban field. Currently I'm a professor of political science at the University of Toronto and I'm a director of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies.

In case you didn't know, this is one of the four major urban research centres in Canada and it's the only one of its kind in Ontario. We manage about 40 projects on various urban subjects and we have a faculty complement of 15, and another 15 professionals and administrators. We handle an overall level of projects from \$8 million to \$10 million at any one time. That's some of the background from which I come.

I want to make two very simple points during the time I have available. Perhaps there will be some time for questions after that.

First of all, I think that some reorganization of the powers and functions of the Metro and GTA area is long overdue. This is a point which has been made by many previous speakers and has been made throughout the community. This is particularly important in view of intergovernmental stress, what is happening between the federal and provincial governments right now, and because of the singular role of large cities in the global economy. It doesn't apply as much to smaller cities.

What this reorganization should look like is quite unclear to me, having read the research literature and having lived in a lot of places and observed a lot of different municipal units. It's not clear what is optimal

size of any municipal unit should be or exactly which powers should be vested at which level. Those decisions often have to be left to local experience and to local citizens to work out.

Another question which is unclear is how this should take place. If one is going to massively reorganize a city such as Toronto, how should you do it? Should you simply announce a new structure, as has happened in this Bill 103, or should you do it in another way? That's really a question I have.

Given the enormous numbers of studies on the subject, it seems to me there are at least four major alternatives: One could simply have promoted the status quo and not done very much about the present situation. It might have been possible to reduce the number of municipalities — some of them are very small and some are financially very weak — with a reorganized Metro. That would be a second alternative. A third alternative might have been to develop a Metro for the 416 region, which effectively is being done in Bill 103, and also a Metro area for the 905 region including the four large regions outside, Halton, Peel, York and Durham, and to have regulated relations between them by some overarching body. Finally, one might have thought of doing exactly what this bill is doing. I wouldn't say this is the worst possible alternative, but it's not the best. However, it is superior to doing nothing.

Given the alternatives, my preference and that of many of my colleagues would be for a structure that integrated both the 416 and the 905 areas because:

(1) The region is an economic and largely environmentally integrated unit and needs to be administered as one in order to gain maximum benefit for the whole province. If you have something powerful which works, why not take advantage of it?

(2) This solution was the considered opinion of the excellent Golden report and the Who Does What panel, appointed by the government, under David Crombie.

(3) I have heard no good reasons given by the government against doing this, aside from a commitment not to change the government in the four 905 regions.

I would also like to talk about the question of process. As everyone in Toronto and probably outside Toronto knows, there is now a major political movement — this term was used by the Toronto Star — against the changes the government wishes to introduce. As you know, this is very unusual in Toronto. Since the Stop Spadina movement of the early 1970s I haven't seen this happen. It has come about for complex reasons, but essentially because of the rapidity and extent of the changes and the failure to adequately consult the community being affected.

In my opinion the sensitivity of many Torontonians, and I include myself very much in this group as I was born here, to this issue resides partly in the fact that municipal institutions are becoming increasingly important in our daily lives, and there are surveys which demonstrate this throughout North America. At the same time, they are going to be even more important over the years because more and more functions and services and perhaps expenditures are going to be downloaded on to us at the municipal level from higher levels of government.

**2050**

In Canada, unfortunately municipal institutions have no constitutional protection under the BNA Act, where they rate the most minor mention in section 92, sandwiched in between eleemosynary institutions on the one hand and saloons, taverns, auctioneers and other licences, both of which are almost throwaway institutions that the provincial government is responsible for. Of course at the time of Confederation there were very few large cities. Toronto, I think, was about 58,000 at the time, so it wasn't very important, but Toronto is very important now and so are many other cities in the province.

Unfortunately we don't have anything in our Constitution which really speaks to the importance of our cities or to the very real importance we as citizens have vested emotionally, historically and in terms of our use of services in these local institutions.

How unlike the new South African Constitution, which devotes a whole chapter to local government and states that "national and provincial governments may not compromise or impede a municipality's ability or right to exercise its power or perform its functions." Maybe there is a lesson to be learned from our Commonwealth cousins who have fought bitterly for the reinstatement of their democratic institutions.

I don't throw in this example to be sarcastic. I'm very concerned, as I think we all should be as Ontarians who are thinking about the future of our cities, that as municipal institutions we really have no place in the constitutional structure. I believe this is one of the major reasons why people are so sensitive to the changes that are going on now. Thank you.

**Mr Silipo:** Professor Stren, one of the suggestions that has been made to try to deal with what we have in front of us now and the sense, as you have outlined, from a number of people that the process is as much to blame as the content of what the government is doing, is that the government should pause, take six months to a year if that's what it takes, if it involves even postponing the municipal elections, and really look at some of the other options you've outlined here.

I don't hear too many people at this point in the game trying to defend very hard the status quo. I think there is very much a willingness to look at a different mix, but it seems to me I hear more and more from people out there something that looks closer to what you're suggesting in terms of integrating the two regions, knowing that the unit is really one now, that the concerns that once stopped at Metro don't any more, that somehow we have to come up with solutions that make some changes both at the regional level and at the local level, but to do that in a systematic way that involves people, both politicians and citizens, in a real discussion. Is that something you would encourage the government to do?

**Mr Stren:** Yes, I agree with that. I think there would be a lot of very good feeling towards such a move on the part of the government from people on all sides of the spectrum. Toronto has been here since 1834, I think, municipal institutions in Ontario have been with us as legislation since 1849 and this is one of the first major changes we've had in Toronto.

I think people would be willing to wait at least a few months or maybe half a year for more discussion of some

alternatives. It may be that the alternatives supported would be similar to what the government is suggesting now, but we haven't heard enough arguments for the various alternatives.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Stren, for coming forward and making a presentation this evening.

### CAROL BURTIN FRIPP

**The Chair:** Carol Fripp, good evening and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Carol Burtin Fripp:** Good evening. My name is Carol Burtin Fripp and I'm president of the Leaside Property Owners' Association, which marks its 50th anniversary this year. We represent 4,000 homes in Leaside, which has been part of the borough of East York since 1967.

Leasiders, by and large, are fairly conservative people. They tend to vote Conservative; they're fiscally cautious; they do not like big government. Leasiders participate actively in how they are governed, coming to LPOA monthly meetings, telling our elected councillors where they stand on the issues and showing up at committee and council meetings to voice their opinions. We are big on volunteerism, giving our time to good causes, joining the home and school associations, belonging to neighbourhood hockey and baseball leagues and historical groups.

A high proportion of Leasiders are pensioners on fixed incomes. We also have a lot of young families. There is a tremendous sense of what Leaside is and of having a community worth working for and, when necessary, worth fighting for.

Leasiders generally favour moves to eliminate overlapping and duplication in government and to rationalize levels of government, but we believe that change, when it comes, should be change for the better, not just for its own sake. We want to know what that change will cost, what it will mean to how we are governed and how we can maintain and protect our neighbourhood.

Now that Bill 103 is upon us, I can assure you that I've heard a lot of comments from our community about the bill and its implications, and about the questions that Bill 103 raises. I'm here tonight to share those comments and questions and concerns with you. Please listen carefully. These are your friends speaking.

Leasiders are asking whether this whole exercise is really about savings and simplifying government. We know there are savings from cutting the number of politicians from 106 to 45, but we ask how many bureaucrats will have to be hired to handle the work of the much larger wards each councillor has to represent. "Politician" may be a dirty word to a lot of people, but "bureaucrat" is worse. For one thing, it's harder to influence bureaucrats than it is to influence politicians. We have a deep and instinctive liking for accountability and a preference for the accountability we can exercise at the ballot box.

The other consideration, of course, is the cost of a bureaucrat versus the cost of a politician. Our local politicians in East York are part-time and we pay them a part-time salary. In East York terms, a full-time bureaucrat at \$65,000 a year costs what we pay for three

councillors. How many full-time, salaried bureaucrats will we need to hire to replace the part-time politicians which Bill 103 eliminates?

We read in the newspapers that in Halifax central administrative staff increased by 600% after amalgamation. We read that in Winnipeg the full-time politicians with full-time salaries — they used to be part-time with part-time salaries before amalgamation — each need ward communication allowances of \$45,000 to be able to communicate properly with their constituents. All of this makes Leasiders more than a little uneasy. They are asking, where is the benefit to taxpayers?

We are also reading every day new and different dollar figures for the cost of downloading social services on to our property taxes. Leasiders, by and large, are very nice people, but if you want to enrage them all you have to do is raise their property taxes. We all pay income taxes, but it's property taxes we really notice. They hit, if you will pardon the pun, very close to home.

Ever since I can remember, people at public meetings have said, "If only we could get education off the property tax," and now for the first time ever people are saying, "Leave it there."

There is a tremendous fear of the impact of downloading social welfare and housing on our property tax bill. People are worried that they will lose their homes. Remember, a lot of Leasiders are cash poor and only house rich — and not just the elderly either.

The tax reform being recommended by the province is also being questioned. Leasiders have long been on record in opposing market value assessment, and by extension, actual or annual value assessment. We think it is too unstable a system on which to base long-range planning. We think that it is unfair to base property taxes solely on market value rather than on the amount of municipal services used or the size of the lot. We think it's wrong to assess a property's value based on sales nearby. We think that value is too subjective a measurement. If you've ever tried to sell your house you'll remember that if you asked six different realtors for a suggested listing price, you probably got six different answers.

We think that ability to pay should factor in somewhere. We think it's grossly unfair to allow a property to be taxed based on what the property could have on it — potential use — rather than what is on it.

**2100**

We think that AVA will lead to more appeals, not fewer appeals, the very problem that AVA proponents say they want to eliminate. I should tell you that in the last municipal campaign when I went from door to door to proselytise on behalf of my candidate, over and over homeowners said, "Just tell me one thing: Is he for or against MVA?" When told that he was against, they said: "Good. That's all I need to know."

Moving right along to amalgamation of the municipalities — and moving is something that a lot of Leasiders may have to do if the things we are reading about daily are true — a lot of Leasiders are business people. Many manage or run companies which have merged with other companies. Some are corporate lawyers who have arranged mergers. They are familiar with the complexities

merging creates. They know that it takes years to massage corporate cultures, work out everything from regulations to process to human resources to business forms. Bill 103's recommendations will require merging hundreds of thousands of bylaws and over 60 collective agreements. Whether you favour amalgamation or not, this is a formidable challenge, not accomplishable in just a few months.

I mentioned when I began that Leasiders prefer small government to big government. In fact, when Leasiders voted for the Common Sense Revolution, they assumed from comments made by Mr Harris and the recommendations of the Tories' own task force headed by Joyce Trimmer, Al Leach, and Dave Johnson, that it would be the bigger and more costly level of government, the Metro level, which would be eliminated in the name of simplifying government, reducing duplication and cutting costs. Imagine our surprise, to say the least, when Bill 103 recommended erasing the local level of government instead.

Leasiders have not been shy in voicing their reaction. Leaside will go from being one small ward out of four small wards to being a very small piece of a giant ward in a megacity of 44 giant wards. We will go from being the tail which sometimes wags the dog to being the tip of the tail that wags nothing at all, even our local environment. Despite the rhetoric from the minister, that is the clear result of Bill 103.

Again I'll mention the word "accountability." We Leasiders prefer governments which are accessible. That's why we have so much more to do with our local government than with the Metro one. We prefer to deal with the politicians directly, not with appointed community councils made up of volunteers — chosen by whom? with what criteria? — a whole third layer of municipal government, and unelected at that. Over and over, people are asking: "How are three layers of municipal government more accountable than the two we have now? How are three layers of municipal government cheaper than what we've got now?" They are also asking: "What happened to getting rid of the Metro layer? We thought this government favoured small government which is closer to the people."

And all of this has happened very quickly; too quickly for most people. I have to tell you that although Leasiders want reform, they resent being pushed into making fast decisions based on uncertain facts and figures. Minister Al Leach has said this has to be done quickly because of deadlines — I believe he called it a small window — so that potential candidates can register in time to start raising campaign funds. Also, the actual ward boundaries have not yet been discussed. By the way, did you know that Leaside is in two federal ridings — Rosedale and Don Valley West — not just one? What happens to us municipally under Bill 103?

Leasiders ask, "What's the rush all of a sudden?" It has happened so fast that there hasn't been time to set up proper channels for discussion and real public input of a detailed nature. These hearings, though welcome, are not enough. Most Leasiders see the referendum as the only real way they are being given to express an opinion.

My ratepayer group represents a community which has always favoured, demanded even, to be consulted on the

issues. Yet Mr Leach has said that no matter what, the government is not willing to consider major changes in the legislation. Mr Harris has said that if people are being repetitive "that doesn't have much impact on us." What does this sort of comment from our leaders do? It gives those who simply want more facts and time to think about them no cautious option other than to vote no. These are not people who go out and, say, buy a car without knowing what it costs, what features it has and whether it has a warranty. Would you? Why would you expect people to go out and buy a megacity without knowing those things?

Mr Gilchrist, you were quoted in the *Globe and Mail* this weekend as saying that there have been no real suggestions and improvements to the bill proposed at these hearings so far. There is a reason for that: There hasn't been time. We've been given a complex and rather overwhelming bill to react to, a bill which in large measure contradicts the recommendations from earlier studies and task forces.

To get real suggestions and real improvements your government — our government — needs to give us time: time to get the figures straight; time to work out the exact details of how each major recommendation will affect our neighbourhood as well as the larger metropolitan area; time to point out flaws when we see them; time to ensure that the patient, Metro Toronto, is being given the right medication for what ails it; time for diagnosis before the surgery. Just because the operating room has been booked doesn't mean the surgery should go ahead.

We strongly recommend that the window Mr Leach referred to be opened further by delaying the 1997 municipal elections for six months or a year to allow for the principle of orderly government. We think the government would be showing both wisdom and consideration by doing this, and would ensure that things are done right. In that time we would like to look at alternatives, such as the arrangement which existed before 1988, when some local councillors also sat on Metro, or versions thereof, which require less staffing and duplication. We would like to look at what we thought the Common Sense Revolution was supposed to be all about: the strengthening of local government and broadening of regional coordination while seeking efficiencies.

Our MPP, Mr Parker, who is here tonight, told a large public meeting last week that in his opinion Leasiders had already implicitly empowered the government to implement Bill 103 when they voted for the Common Sense Revolution because somewhere in the document it says Mr Harris promised change. The voters in my community did not intend for that single word "change" to be interpreted as a blank cheque. Leasiders have simply not heard enough facts to convince them that Bill 103 will ensure both cost savings and good government.

True, the issue of municipal reform is far from new, but the measures in Bill 103 are new, and different from anything recommended before. Leasiders do not favour the status quo. We are used to a local government which is close to the ground, accessible and accountable. We like that. We may not always agree with East York council, but we know we can go and speak to each councillor and present our perspective and be effective.

We know each councillor is familiar with the Leaside community and considers our priorities in planning policy. If a new form of governance is proposed, we want to make sure that in local issues our accessibility, differences and community values are maintained. We would rather be safe than sorry.

I was encouraged to read, Mr Gilchrist, your statement that, "If someone was to present a model that showed better savings and a better way of delivering service and something that would address all the other concerns that we think this bill addresses, of course we'd be open to them." We will only find that improved model if you give us a period in which to examine Bill 103 like a balance sheet, both in terms of dollars and in terms of governance. We urge this government to make that time available by delaying the civic elections. We will be glad to work with you, if you will work with us.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Ms Fripp. We appreciate your coming in this evening and making a very detailed presentation before us.

With only a minute and a half let me ask one point, if I can, because I think it comes back perhaps to the root of the concern about accessibility and accountability. Would you agree with me that one of the underpinnings of democracy, or real democracy, is representation by population, that when we go to the ballot box we should each have, roughly — it's not a perfect size — the same power from our one vote?

**Ms Fripp:** I would certainly agree with you that that's the ideal, although when we look at this country we notice that Prince Edward Island, for example, has maybe fewer people than East York.

**Mr Gilchrist:** We've got our hands full solving the problems provincially; federally is another question.

One of the things we saw with some interest was that when the mayors produced their report in December, using their model including the changes they proposed for East York, it came out to 48 councillors. Our model, based on the provincial and federal boundaries, is 44. First off, would you agree that 48 or 44 is not an appreciable difference?

**Ms Fripp:** It's fairly similar.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Would you agree with me that would at least restore a balance, that every person across Metro would have that equal say? Right now, just to use a Scarborough example, there are some wards with 24,000 voters and others with 60,000, so clearly you have two and a half times the voting power in one. Would that at least be an accomplishment from this goal and something that, even if we had another six months, as you suggest, you would accept as one of the enhancements?

**Ms Fripp:** It certainly could be if it were done right, if the wards were arranged in such a way that made sense, yes.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I'm sure the Chair is going to tell me I'm running out of time. The one thing I would encourage you to do is that, as we look at the ward boundaries and how the federal ridings are broken up, I think you actually have an advantage, that you would have two councillors. Because of the way Leaside is divided between federal boundaries, you're guaranteed to have two councillors articulating the viewpoints of your

community, and I would encourage you to work with East York and with the transition team to bring that about. Thank you again. Sorry we didn't have more time.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

Before we break members, earlier in the day Mr Colle raised a point with respect to a presentation of Mayor Faubert which I said I would look into. Just quickly, my comments on that are the following:

Many members make many assertions about other members and many members paraphrase other members and many statements are made by all members every day.

It would be an impossible and untenable situation to have Chairs or the Speaker running around verifying all members' statements that other members might take exception to.

Therefore, as the tradition of my position dictates, it is not the Chair's duty to judge or determine the validity or veracity of points made by a member. For the most part, except for unparliamentary language, members should honourably self-regulate themselves in their conduct.

Thank you very much. We stand in recess until Wednesday morning at 9 am.

*The committee adjourned at 2111.*

## ERRATUM

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
G-63	2933	2	28	<b>Ms Aldus:</b> It's also very scary. It's very intimidating

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*Mr Terence H.	Young (Halton Centre / -Centre PC)

*\*In attendance / présents*

**Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:**

Ms Isabel	Bassett (St Andrew-St Patrick PC) for Mr Tascona
Mr Jim	Brown (Scarborough West / -Ouest PC) for Mrs Ross
Mr John	Cleary (Cornwall L) for Mr Gravelle
Mr Douglas B.	Ford (Etobicoke-Humber PC) for Mrs Munro
Mr Steve	Gilchrist (Scarborough East / -Est PC) for Mr Hardeman
Mr John	Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale PC) for Mr Young
Mr Monte	Kwinter (Wilson Heights L) for Mr Gravelle
Mr Dan	Newman (Scarborough Centre / -Centre PC) for Mr Stewart
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Mr Richard	Patten (Ottawa Centre / -Centre L) for Mr Sergio
Mr John R.	O'Toole (Durham East / -Est PC) for Mr Danford
Mr Tony	Silipo (Dovercourt ND) for Mr Len Wood

**Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

Ms Marilyn	Churley (Riverdale ND)
Mr John	Gerretsen (Kingston and The Islands /Kingston et Les Îles L)

**Clerk Pro Tem /**

**Greffière par intérim:** Ms Lisa Freedman

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ISSN 1180-5218

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 36th Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 19 February 1997

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 19 février 1997

Standing committee on  
general government

City of Toronto Act, 1996

Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto



Chair: Bart Maves  
Clerk: Lynn Mellor

Président : Bart Maves  
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Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Wednesday 19 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Mercredi 19 février 1997

*The committee met at 0904 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

**The Chair (Mr Bart Maves):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the standing committee on general government hearings on Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act.

SIMON MILES

**The Chair:** Would Simon Miles please come forward. Good morning, sir. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes today to make a presentation.

**Mr Simon Miles:** My name is Simon Miles. I am a resident of the city of Toronto and I make my living as a public policy consultant, working internationally. I believe you have a copy of my remarks. I will not be reading them verbatim but I do subscribe to everything that's said there.

Relative to my background that's pertinent to Bill 103, I cut my teeth on urban governance when working for the Bureau of Municipal Research in Toronto, a privately funded research organization at the time. Later, I helped establish and then ran the Toronto-based secretariat of the International Association for Metropolitan Research and Development. In addition, and I suppose it's called a mega-book today, I produced a mega-book, *Metropolitan Problems: International Perspectives*, the lessons of which have been left with me for the rest of my life.

In the few minutes available I'd like to touch on four areas of concern.

First, the process of deciding on the future of the governance of this region. As a citizen in Canada, I believe in democracy. Indeed, I take it for granted. If I cannot believe in democracy, I believe I cannot see myself as a citizen, and that would be very disturbing. Yet that is exactly how I do feel. I've worked all over the world in many countries where they do not enjoy democracy and of course I find it very surprising that I have to worry about that here.

I feel this way because people are concerned about the overwhelming amount of information coming at them, and we're only getting a small piece of the information,

of the total package, that we and our legislators in this room and others need to make informed decisions. There's the artificial urgency, the insincere commitment, and there is no evidence to support the government's contentions that a megacity would be better for us. Worst of all, the proposal is to remove the one layer of government that does listen to the citizens.

The solution? Put off the reading of Bill 103 indefinitely, postpone the next local elections, give us your evidence that what you are proposing would indeed be better for us in every respect and enable citizens to participate in decision-making.

Second, controlling the growth of the urban region. Why are people so concerned about the continuing outward growth of the urban region? A very obvious question. Ralf Dahrendorf observed in his seminal book, *Life Chances*, that people seek to improve their lives not only by opening up more options but also by strengthening the quality of their associations, or what he called their ligatures, with people, places and things. Thus, quite clearly, it is easier to identify with an urban place if it has some definite, distinctive bounds.

Similarly, if we are to enjoy the countryside, then we have to know that the city does indeed end. The bigger the urban area, the smaller the chance of finding that opportunity to relate to nature in peace and quiet.

Metro was established largely to control urban growth, and for a while, in partnership with the province, through controlling the supply of water pipes and sewers, it did a reasonably good job. The city really stopped at Steeles. Then the province loosened the controls and we needed the GTA, and it hasn't worked very well since. We are losing our distinctive recreational areas, and much of our agricultural land is tied up in the hands of speculators.

Beyond the need to control the outward growth is the need to give shape and a sense of place to places within the urban region. Within today's Metro we have seen the slow but successful emergence of subcentres in Scarborough and North York to give some, albeit inadequate, balance to downtown as a commercial centre. In my view, this is very healthy. It's been a product of creative competition between these municipalities, aided and abetted by Metro. If we amalgamate the municipalities within Metro, I think this job will go unfinished.

0910

There is a lesson here in New York's amalgamation of 1898. With this amalgamation, downtown became the place of consequence. It was hard for the other centres to maintain a profile, and as a result you've got in the urban area of 16 million very few countermagnets to downtown.

The solution: eliminate Metro; give the Greater Toronto Services Board some effective coordinating

powers; keep and strengthen the current six municipalities or, I would prefer, encourage people in East York and York to join with Toronto, but let them make that decision.

Outside Metro, within the GTSB service area, re-create strong, single-tier, local government; have the constituent municipalities within the GTSB service area elect from their ranks their representatives to the GTSB; and finance the GTSB through assessments on, and ratified by, constituent municipalities.

At the neighbourhood or local level, we need space-sensitive planning. We've got this now. It works. Let's not let it go.

My third issue is financing the services. Bill 103 is supposed to save the taxpayer money. I believe Wendell Cox has demonstrated quite clearly that this is not going to be so. More to the point, Bill 103 and related proposed legislation may do little to resolve our local finance problems, and indeed the downloading, as you've heard time and again, seems to make our current problems worse.

Our current problems, those that have been with us a long time, relate to the shortcomings of the property tax, and you'll see on page 5 that I list all of those concerns: the over-reliance on the property tax; the uneven distribution of commercial and industrial property; the continuing contribution to urban sprawl; the inequities in assessment; and the damage to the character of areas like Rosedale. I don't live in Rosedale but I am concerned that it's going to disappear. As a taxpayer, I believe the solution is to pursue a system of public finance that reflects the principles of being equitable, sustainable in tough times, economic, non-destructive of our other values and transparently honest.

There are two options. First, forget about this business of achieving revenue neutrality. It's a very short-term goal and it ignores the intermunicipal differences. Look to a country like the Netherlands — there are several countries that operate the system I'm describing — and try a revenue-sharing approach, slightly different from what we've heard from some of your colleagues, Mr Gilchrist, but worth exploring. Essentially, it relies mainly on income taxes, corporate and individual, and with the same amount as now or slightly less being raised from commercial and industrial properties but much less from residential properties. When you work it out, this should solve all of the problems associated with the property tax. My paper goes into that a bit more.

This sharing would be on a province-wide basis. The annual meetings to decide on the sharing would involve provincial and municipal representatives and be very public to ensure accountability to the taxpayer. All property should be assessed on current use value, as opposed to market value, which would then obviate this concern of the speculative value element being built in.

By putting little reliance on residential property tax, it would be possible to update assessments everywhere without having nearly such a tax impact on the owners of currently underassessed property. Don't forget, one would be taxing those same owners but on their ability to pay through income taxes, and indeed the province could advertise that it would be seeking its promised tax cut through reductions to the residential property tax.

**The Chair:** Mr Miles, I have to let you know that we're coming to the end of your allotted time. Could you wrap up?

**Mr Miles:** On the matter of transparent honesty, then, I have one request of the minister: Could he please make it crystal-clear that the reserve funds held by the seven municipalities subject to Bill 103 will remain with those municipalities or any resultant combination thereof? I understand that the comparable proposed legislation pertaining to the amalgamation of Kingston is much more transparent and makes it very clear to Kingston's taxpayers that they will indeed retain control of the reserve funds. Since some taxpayers in Metro Toronto are very interested in making sure that those \$1.3 billion reserve funds stay with them, we'd like to have that assurance.

Since I cannot address my fourth item, on citizen participation in local government decision-making, I just hope that you will indeed find time to read that last part of the paper. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Miles, for coming forward to make your presentation.

#### ONTARIO RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

**The Chair:** Would Paul Oliver please come forward. Good morning, Mr Oliver. Welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes this morning for a presentation. If there's some time left at the end of your presentation, I'll ask the Liberal caucus to ask some questions.

**Mr Paul Oliver:** Good morning. My name is Paul Oliver. I'm president of the Ontario Restaurant Association. The ORA welcomes the opportunity to participate in these consultations and to comment on this issue as it immensely effects many of our members located in Metro Toronto.

Today I am appearing on behalf of the ORA and more specifically on behalf of the Toronto region of the Ontario Restaurant Association. On behalf of the association, I want to indicate our strong support for Bill 103 and the amalgamation of Metro Toronto into one unified city.

The ORA believes that this is a positive step towards creating a more conducive and manageable economic and business environment in Metro Toronto. By amalgamating the six cities of Metro Toronto into one unified city, we will begin to reflect what consumers already recognize, that Metro Toronto is already one unified city.

The restaurant and tourism industry, being very customer sensitive, deals with thousands of customers every day. What we have seen within our industry is that customers do not respect nor recognize artificial political boundaries. They will patronize and travel to any establishment that delivers the service and products they desire. Unfortunately, the current political system in Metro Toronto is not designed to reflect this reality. In fact, for many small business operators, including many small restaurant operators, the current political structure is a major inhibitor to doing business as it creates a massively unfair and unequal regulatory and business environment.

What many people do not realize is that a small business in Scarborough does compete with a business in Toronto and that a business in Toronto does compete

with a business in North York, and in many cases competitors may be as close as across the street from each other.

However, under the current municipal political structure in Metro Toronto, these very operators that are competing aggressively and directly against each other may have radically different rules under which they are attempting to operate. Many of these rules dictate their very profitability, their very viability and, in many cases, the very existence of these establishments; rules which say that in the city of Toronto you cannot have a dance floor in a restaurant or that you cannot have more than two pool tables, regardless of your size, or different hydro rates or different municipal tax rates determine whether you're located on the east side or west side of Victoria Park; most recently, rules which allow smoking after 9 pm on one corner or allow smoking in a separately enclosed room on another corner or allow smoking at any time of the day on a third corner or permit no smoking at all on the fourth corner. But this is the reality and unfairness that currently confronts small business operators who are competing directly with each other.

Generally small business operators can see their competitor from their front window. Often the competitor they are facing has different rules and, as a result, can provide different services to the customers which they both are competing for. From the customer's perspective, they do not care whether they eat on the west side or the east side of Victoria Park; they will go where they are getting the service and the product they expect.

Unfortunately, due to the dysfunctional political boundaries drawn throughout Metro Toronto, many small business operators cannot compete directly because their hands have been tied by their local councils.

It's unfortunate that many politicians who currently govern the various municipalities of Metro Toronto have failed to recognize that their municipalities are not islands unto themselves and that they must coordinate public policy, they must have uniformity of rules and standards and that the reality is that the customer will travel and the customer does not recognize these artificial political boundaries; it's time the political system did the same.

As of today, we now have six different smoking bylaws in the six different municipalities of Metro Toronto, but we only have one customer base. Think of how damaging it was when North York recently introduced their smoking bylaw on January 1, 1997, when on the west side of Victoria Park operators were forced to prohibit smoking and not serve their customers, while on the east side of Victoria Park operators could still permit and provide smoking to their customers.

## 0920

Think if you were an operator, you had invested your life savings, you had mortgaged your home, you were trying to support your family and were struggling to run a restaurant or a small business and some municipal politician came along and said, "We are going to tie your left hand behind your back, but we are not going to tie the hand of your competitor directly across the street."

To the Ontario Restaurant Association and to small business operators across Metro Toronto, these are the types of rules and regulations that do not make much

sense. These are the types of issues and irregularities which a megacity must begin to address, and will.

The megacity will also begin to resolve the dysfunctional nature of the licensing of restaurants and other businesses in Metro Toronto. To the ORA, it does not seem exactly reasonable that you would have the licensing of restaurants and nightclubs at the Metro level but the inspection of them at the city level with no sharing of relevant information.

Why would a restaurant in Toronto need a Metro Toronto licence when that licence is not used for any direct or indirect enforcement? The powers of enforcement have been separated from the powers of licensing, and it is simply not working. Is it not time we brought these powers back together? The megacity will do this.

While supportive of the megacity legislation, the ORA does not believe that Bill 103 goes far enough. We believe that Bill 103 should and must create a mechanism which will start to harmonize bylaws throughout Metro Toronto. The bylaws which I mentioned earlier are merely the tip of the iceberg of the barriers facing business operating in Metro today. We believe that a formal process, including fixed time frames, must be built into Bill 103, which would force the new council to set up a process which will begin to harmonize these inequities. Without this initiative being incorporated into Bill 103, the very problems that this legislation is attempting to solve will continue to be entrenched and embedded in the new political system.

In conclusion, I want to reconfirm the Ontario Restaurant Association's support for amalgamating the six municipalities of Metro Toronto into one unified city. We would, however, premise that this support pertains directly to the political reorganization of Metro Toronto.

We do, however, have a number of concerns regarding other restructuring initiatives which the government is currently undertaking, and when that legislation comes before committee we look forward to coming back and discussing in more detail those concerns, including those relating to property tax reform. However, since Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, only focuses on the political apparatus of amalgamation, we thought it best to discuss the issues in the legislation and not what was peripheral.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. You have plenty of time for questions.

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** Despite all these encumbrances — and I do agree with you that there are some very complex issues you have to face in terms of jurisdictions as a small business person in Toronto — I think your organization should be applauded, because it has certainly been recognized that Toronto probably surpasses even New York in terms of the quality and the excellence of its restaurants. I think it's in part due to the small business people, who have been very cognizant of the needs of their clients, and organizations like yourself. It's certainly something to be proud of as residents of Metro, that you've accomplished that over the years. Sometimes we forget the good things in Metro.

As you know, what the government has been talking about in the last couple of weeks — I know I heard the parliamentary assistant, Mr Hardeman, on morning radio the other day. He was trying to reassure people that local

neighbourhood or community identity would be retained by the establishment of these community councils, which are not in the legislation but they're part of the background piece.

One of the things I thought was quite interesting in terms of your concern about different bylaws in different jurisdictions is that he referred to the fact that these community councils would be allowed to pass bylaws pertaining to different communities that would mirror the existing communities that now exist or cities that now exist and that these bylaws might also relate to even the assessing of rates of taxation, in terms of whether they would have different levels of service delivery, in essence establishing different particular bylaws for recognized areas. I wonder if you'd like to comment on that.

**Mr Oliver:** As an organization, we wouldn't support blanket bylaws that are different from area to area. The issue we referenced relative to licensing of restaurants, and this is part of the problem we have in Metro Toronto, is that other municipalities throughout Ontario have the power, under one of the previous pieces of legislation, to put a special condition on a restaurant licence or do site-specific licensing to say that you must close by a certain time or you must not have your patio open and things like that.

In Metro Toronto, if there's a problem with too much noise in the Danforth area — and I reference a direct example. Residents were concerned about the noise coming from nightclubs or restaurants in the Danforth area. The only response the city of Toronto had was to then bring in blanket legislation and say that you must limit dance floors, DJ booths and pool tables to 6% of the entire square footage, even though the problem was very limited to a small area of a block-and-a-half radius, probably three establishments in toto. We then ended up with this massive bylaw which makes things like the CN Tower's nightclub illegal in the city of Toronto.

The problem is that the tools aren't there to do that. By bringing the licensing back together with the enforcement, we hopefully will alleviate the need for these blanket bylaws and will be able to do site-specific where there are specific problems.

**Mr Colle:** I know a spokesman for the police department was just sort of rubbing his hands in glee saying, "I can't wait for amalgamation, because what that will enable us to do is to have this one blanket parking bylaw right across Metro." As you know, Mr Oliver, there's a real variety of parking needs everywhere from Cabbagetown to the St Clair-Dufferin area to Scarborough in terms of the type of parking people do. How do you respond to that anticipation by the police department in terms of these blanket bylaws in terms of parking?

**Mr Oliver:** One of the things we hear a lot is complaints from tourists that they don't know what the parking rules are in certain areas. I would actually support our organization, standardized rules across Metro so that when you arrive in Metro you know what the rules are and they don't change from block to block or from street to street.

When tourists come to Toronto or they go to another major city, they know what the rules are when they arrive and they don't get this patchwork of smoking bylaws or

parking bylaws; they have one standard rule. I think that is something that should be sought and hopefully will come out of this legislation.

**Mr Colle:** In North York they have a bylaw that you can't park on the streets at night. The police department is saying, "Have the uniform bylaw right across Metro of no parking at night." How can that be possible?

**Mr Oliver:** The reference I made to harmonizing, bringing the standard rules across, in particular in the commercial areas, I think it can be done and can be done effectively. But for the customer, the point I go back to, be it an international customer or a customer who lives downtown or a customer who lives in North York, they need to know what the rules are when they go out to different establishments. They don't need to be guessing, "I'm going from Toronto to North York, so that means I can park on the street or I can't," or "I can smoke there, but I can't smoke here."

For the customer, I would hazard to guess that probably 50% or 60% of people don't know what the north boundary is of the city of Toronto. If you were to ask me what it was, I probably would have a very difficult time describing this variable, moving target all around the city of Toronto. The customer simply doesn't know that.

When North York's bylaw went into effect on smoking, one of the biggest questions we had was: "What area does it cover? I'm not sure if I'm on the border, on this side of the street or on that side of the street. When I see my competitor smoking over there, does that mean I can have smoking here?" That's for the operator. For the customer, it's a complete nightmare because they have no idea, in a lot of cases, whether they're in Scarborough or North York or Toronto, because these barriers just sort of float along streets and they're not drawn along commercial groupings or along any inherent geographical boundary, in many cases; it's simply drawn on the west side or the east side of a street.

**Mr Colle:** Just getting back to this parking example —

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South):** Excuse me, Chair, how long is this? Everybody gets 10 minutes?

**The Chair:** No, Mr Bisson, several groups get 15 minutes. That was what the committee agreed upon.

**Mr Bisson:** I thought we said at the beginning it was 10 minutes.

**The Chair:** No, I didn't. The question time that remains goes to one caucus. I think that's a copy of the subcommittee report for you there.

**Mr Colle:** In terms of this parking situation, which is one of the acute problems I think small business faces throughout Metro, especially in the intensified downtown areas, how can you not recognize that there is a difference in terms of the impact on establishments? Let's take College and Clinton. The parking conditions are unique there. How can you have the same bylaw for College and Clinton, in terms of parking, as you can for Victoria Park and Lawrence?

0930

**Mr Oliver:** I think you can designate specific types of streets: main arteries versus secondary streets. I think a lot of municipalities do that. Even within the city of Toronto, you can go from street to street and have different rules, but it's clear that you don't park on the

main arteries, in some cases, you don't park on Sundays in the downtown core, different things like that. But there's no reason to have those types of principles applied differently in Scarborough or in Toronto or North York. If you know it's a main artery then you don't park there, but if it is a secondary one there's parking, or if there's metering in those areas.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Oliver, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

CANADIAN TAXPAYERS FEDERATION,  
ONTARIO DIVISION

**The Chair:** Would Paul Pagnuelo please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Paul Pagnuelo:** Good morning, Mr Chairman and committee members. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation welcomes the opportunity to comment on Bill 103, which would amalgamate Toronto's six municipalities and regional government into a new megacity government of 2.3 million people.

"On the surface, collapsing a number of smaller municipalities into one big, efficient governmental region seems like a cost-saving slam dunk. After all, do you really need five separate water departments, five separate garbage departments, five separate building inspection departments etc?

"However, there is another side. That can be seen most readily in the fact that municipalities proposing to eliminate cost and duplication by amalgamation invariably have within their own borders many competing suppliers of goods and services that the taxpayers want in their role as consumers. For example, it is hard to find a region that doesn't have several automobile dealerships or many providers of automobile repair and service. Wouldn't consumers be better served if those duplicated facilities were provided by a single provider? In fact, why do we need to have more than one automobile company, more than one garage and more than one gasoline provider?

"We have to have alternatives, because without competition the quality of the product deteriorates, and the consumer, while perhaps initially saving the cost of duplication and overlap of facilities, ultimately gets a very bad product. That was certainly the case in East Germany with the production of the car driven only by those who had no alternative, the Trabant.

"If amalgamation doesn't serve the interests of consumers as buyers of autos and other goods and services, why do we expect that it will serve their interests as consumers of government services?"

Those are not our words but the words of Michael Walker, not the Michael Walker who is the councillor for the city of Toronto, but the Michael Walker who is executive director of the Fraser Institute.

Up front, I want to acknowledge that the federation has generally been quite supportive of the efforts of this government to correct the very serious problems the province was faced with when you took over office, problems which developed over a long period and which unfortunately, by their very nature, cannot be resolved as quickly and as easily as we all might like.

As a national taxpayer organization our mandate includes promoting fiscal and democratic reforms. The

Canadian Taxpayers Federation is anxious to see efficiencies achieved in our local government structures, better value for money, higher-quality service delivery at lower cost. I know the objective is shared by this government. One might question, therefore, why we have completely opposite views on how it should be achieved.

There are times when you can only shake your head in disbelief at what some politicians say and the conclusions they reach. Take for example the recent reported comments of one Metro Toronto councillor who is described as being a wholehearted supporter of amalgamation: "I've read every book, every essay, talked to every journalist, every scholar in the field of municipal research, and there's no doubt in my mind that not only is [amalgamation] the good choice, it's the only viable option we have."

The councillor is either stretching the truth like an elastic band, or else he's one of those big-time, tax-spending politicians who just can't wait to lighten the weight of your wallet by creating more bureaucracy and cranking up the cheque-writing machine at the new city hall. If he really was an advocate of efficient government, he obviously hasn't read what the Fraser Institute or experts like Andrew Sanctor and Wendell Cox have to say about amalgamation.

Our review of their research concludes that amalgamation will produce the exact opposite effect of what everyone wants: It's going to produce higher costs, and that means higher taxes.

The perceived savings, by eliminating six city halls and their separate bureaucracies, are far less than the higher costs which would be associated with a megacity government. The empirical evidence worldwide is that higher, not lower, unit costs are associated with larger governments.

If the claim was believable that the citizens of Metro Toronto would not only be better served by a megacity but that it would produce real cost savings in the hundreds of millions of dollars, then by extension, why not do away with municipalities altogether? Let's just turn the delivery and funding of all our local services over to Big Sister here at Queen's Park, or for that matter, while we're at it, let's also eliminate all our provincial governments and we can just have Jean Chrétien and the Liberals service all our government needs, federal, provincial and municipal, out of Ottawa.

The proposition of course is ridiculous, and so too is the claim that amalgamation, on its own, will produce real net savings.

The reality is that government amalgamation works against the best interests of taxpayers. Superregional governments not only dilute democratic control of local government by citizens, they also increase the power of special interests. The only economies of scale they provide are to public sector unions whose power increases exponentially as the size of government increases. Large labour contracts, which impose inefficient work rules and discourage customer-oriented service, will result in lower quality and excessively high unit costs for public services, and that's going to result in higher taxes.

Eliminating the competitive aspect of lower-tier municipal governments means reducing the potential for

innovation. As governments become larger, gone are the benchmarks to draw contrasts between effective and ineffective, efficient and inefficient governments.

I am sure that the government is quite well aware of what the expert opinion is on large governments and amalgamation. I doubt that the arguments I've advanced against amalgamation are unfamiliar to you, and I find it difficult to believe that the government is so willing to dismiss them out of hand, particularly when there is no credible evidence to support its position that amalgamation on its own will save taxpayers money.

I'm sure I don't need to remind you of what the Premier told us in a pre-election survey that his party's position was on the issue of municipal governance and the elimination of regional-county governments versus local, lower-tier governments.

Why then is the government in such a rush to consolidate municipalities across Ontario when it is obvious that doing so will not create governments that are more efficient? And why is it so unwilling to respect the views of the public on such a fundamental issue as how they should be governed, while at the same time holding itself out as a champion of direct democracy?

We can only conclude that amalgamation is being driven solely by the need to even out, across large regional areas, the impact of social service downloads.

While we support the government's decision to control and reduce education costs by relieving school boards of their taxing authority, the uploading of education costs from residential property taxes has left the government in a difficult fiscal position. The reality is that there is simply no way you could add to your fiscal challenge by uploading \$5.4 billion from property taxes and keep your election promises of a balanced budget and a 30% personal income tax cut.

This government can live up to its election promises and avoid the need for downloading most social services by trading its remaining 15% personal income tax cut for an equivalent reduction in residential property taxes. If the province were to upload the \$5.4 billion in education costs from the residential tax bill and download only hard services, community public health and ambulance services and cancel all municipal grant programs, property taxes would drop by about \$3.2 billion, which is slightly more than the estimated cost of the last half of the promised income tax cut.

The federation believes that this would be a win-win situation for both the province and taxpayers.

By delivering the remaining half of the tax cut through property tax reductions, middle class taxpayers and those on fixed incomes would get far greater tax relief. Not only will the government have delivered on its promised tax cut, it will also have removed the major irritant of education from residential property taxes.

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The proposal would result in true disentanglement and would create far better accountability by avoiding the need for shared funding partnerships. It would also eliminate the chaos and high transition costs associated with amalgamation. More important, it would allow the province to pursue the strategic alternative of creating high-performance, customer-oriented local governments

that, through competitive tendering practices, will produce higher-quality service delivery at lower unit costs.

Bigger and more remote government, large bureaucracies and central planning contravene the principles of the CSR. If the government proceeds with forcing municipal amalgamations across Ontario, it may as well kiss its relationship with voters in core constituencies goodbye. I can tell you, from the feedback we're getting, you are alienating your natural support base. Quite frankly, it's time for a reality check.

I respectfully suggest that the government give serious consideration to our proposal, a proposal that will meet your election promises and that will result in far more efficient government, government that is smaller, government that is competitive, government that is accountable and government that is responsive. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Mr Bisson, you have a little more than three minutes.

**Mr Bisson:** I want to thank you very much. I never thought I'd see the day where I'd find myself a little on the same side of the fence as the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. I've been in situations where I've always understood that the Canadian Taxpayers Federation were strong allies of the Tories and standing squarely behind them. It's interesting to see — you're not saying, I think, that you're about to run away from them, but you have some deep concern about what they're doing.

I agree with your assertion: The problem with what we're doing with 103 is that we will more than likely be creating large bureaucracies that tend to be fairly inefficient in the end. I have to ask you this political question, as you alluded to your questionnaire; you said you had sent a questionnaire out to the Premier and other Tory candidates in the last election and canvassed them on whether they would or would not move in the direction of creating a larger city. You just skimmed over that, but I wonder if you can share with the committee and others what those responses were from the Premier and others.

**Mr Pagnuelo:** I've got the original here, so we may as well read right from it. I think it's very important because of a lot of conclusions that people drew from the response.

We asked two questions specifically in terms of municipal government. The reason we asked a lot of these questions was because we've been very involved with local municipal ratepayer groups over the years, very aware of the concerns people had, with the possibilities of amalgamations in the past. We asked two specific questions to the Premier.

The first one was, "If elected, your party would eliminate regional and county governments and would transfer their responsibilities in funding to local municipalities and/or to the provincial government." The choice was "agree," "disagree" or "undecided." The Premier answered "undecided," but added, as you can see right here, "looking at favourably."

The second question we asked was, "If elected, your party would eliminate local municipalities and would transfer their responsibilities to regional and/or county governments." The answer quite clearly was "disagree." There was nothing added to that.

In our mind, we could only read this one way. We read it in conjunction with what came out of the Trimmer

report. This was clearly a message that if, in terms of municipal governance, there was going to be any disbanding of any level of government, it would be at the county-regional level and strong local governments would remain.

**Mr Bisson:** Do you feel they've broken their promise to the electorate and broken their word to you?

**Mr Pagnuelo:** What we're seeing now is in complete contrast to what this said, because really, what we're doing de facto is creating a large regional government. You can call it a city, but it's a large regional government.

**Mr Bisson:** You also made allusions to the CSR. In the Common Sense Revolution, there is direct reference to making smaller government, making sure we don't create larger bureaucracies. Do you think the direction they're going in 103 is completely opposite? Is it another broken promise?

**Mr Pagnuelo:** It is, because they're going to be creating a bureaucracy that will be so large that it's going to become unmanageable. I'm a free marketer, and you and I will probably disagree on that, but we look at competition, the importance of competition. We look at the importance of competition in business, but that importance also exists in government. If you have a city with 2.3 million people, you're not going to be able to contrast that government with any other municipal government to see if it is being as efficient as it could be.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Pagnuelo, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### PETER DEWDNEY

**The Chair:** Would Peter Dewdney please come forward. Good morning, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Peter Dewdney:** Good morning, Mr Chair and committee members. I'm a little nervous here, but I'll try. Please bear with me. This isn't written in the brief, but I want to preface this a little. I still feel uncomfortable with what I've written and what I'm presenting. There is so much information and so many things happening that I keep on revising, day to day, what I want to say. Part of what I'm saying here today is an emotional response to what I have experienced as an Ontario taxpayer and as a Toronto citizen over the last several weeks, if not months, and I hope you bear with it.

My name is Peter Dewdney. I live at 1 Fifth Street on Ward's Island in the city of Toronto. I work as the general manager of Windmill Line Housing Co-op located in the St Lawrence Market area. I am here today because I have grave concerns with the direction this government is taking with respect to the proposed amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto into a single municipality, including the downloading of social welfare and social housing costs on to the municipal property tax base.

Central to my concern is the loss of democracy we are currently experiencing and the loss of responsible government we would experience under a giant municipal government. You've repeatedly dismissed the objections of local politicians as self-serving. You seem not to understand that these are our politicians and to denigrate them is to denigrate us, the citizens who voted for them.

You do not believe that politicians are honourable. To denigrate them is in fact to denigrate yourselves.

Realizing that for the first time in my life I am living under a regime that demonstrates such disrespect for democracy has made these last few weeks really frightening for me, and I say that sincerely. I've been frightened at the kinds of rhetoric that have come out of this government. You plead that you are doing what you were elected to do. It's become eminently clear that you did not propose this amalgamation and you certainly did not ever propose downloading the costs of social services and social housing on to the municipal taxpayer; of course you didn't, because if you had you wouldn't have been elected.

For me and the people I know, Toronto is a place where we cherish our communities as healthy places to raise our children, to grow up in, to be educated, to earn a living in and to retire in. It has been said that the measure of a successful democracy is how it treats its minorities. In recent history, communities within Toronto — and I speak of them now as minorities in a sense — have had many councils that have succeeded in providing good government because they have responded to the needs of the communities.

In my experience, this is the only level of government with a reasonably good track record. By "this level of government," I don't mean just Toronto, because I think other municipalities in Metropolitan Toronto have been successful as well. The citizens of Toronto have real power that attends a healthy democracy. In a megacity model, councillors representing areas 20 miles away from the downtown core and who represent a large proportion of commuter interests are not going to be sensitive to the need for preserving neighbourhoods south of Eglinton Avenue when it comes to planning bylaws governing heights and densities, building of expressways into the downtown, abandoning of existing environmental projects and health-related bylaws, expanding the Island Airport into an international jetport etc.

**0950**

It's interesting to note that Scarborough, for instance, has developed significant problems with respect to the growth of crime. Unfortunately, Scarborough, at least in my opinion, was developed for people with automobiles, and that left the major streets to the occupancy of plazas and the backyard fences of residences. Criminals can come and go in total anonymity in Scarborough because there is no neighbourhood stewardship of the streets. As a result, you see a large amount of drug dealing out there and other kinds of crime that make women feel unsafe to walk on the streets at night, for instance.

Scarborough, as it comes to identify solutions to its unique problems, may require planning bylaws quite distinct from the rest of Metro. It may need additional tax money for possible redevelopment. It would probably want to define and carry out its own solutions with its own budget because its residents and civic politicians will continue to be the ones most knowledgeable about Scarborough. A megacity will certainly not be able to respond to Scarborough's evolution into a healthier community.

Etobicoke, North York, York and East York also require unique legislative capabilities to meet their unique needs.

Your proposed local councils miss the point. Such committees will not have the power, as I understand it anyway, to persuade a mega-council of the benefits of preserving healthy communities, communities that most councillors will have a good chance of never experiencing in their lifetimes. I don't mean that they aren't living in good communities but that they will not be able to experience the communities that may come under threat from time to time within a megacity. Is it possible that you have bought into your own propaganda that our cities are somehow similar to an overloaded electrical panel?

Bigger government is more remote from humanitarian values. In recent years voters have become increasingly cynical of governments that have behaved in ways that are at odds with their campaign promises. We have been finding ourselves in the position of having to wait four or five years to throw a government out because they have seriously misread what it is that we the voters value. The people of Ontario have come to cynically believe that politicians are either unable or unwilling to respond to their needs. It was on such a wave of frustration and anger, in fact, that your own party was elected.

Having regard to the way in which the Trudeau government and then the Mulroney government were thrown out of office, it would seem that the bigger the government the more likely they are to misread the values of their constituents. A Metro-wide government is likely to repeat the same pattern.

Yes, there is a strong and legitimate concern about the deficit. These are legitimate concerns and addressing them is important, but this acknowledgement in no way validates the direction of Bill 103 or, for that matter, Bill 104, as they both reduce the democratic and responsible power of the citizen. Metro council has already given us spectacular examples of steamrolling neighbourhoods and community values.

Your reversal of education and social welfare and housing costs removes the ability of a municipality such as Toronto to pay for the extra programs it needs to pay for inner-city and immigrant education needs. It removes our ability to make real choices. The downloading of social housing costs without any capital replacement reserves places an enormous liability on the municipality. As a further point on that, any fluctuation in interest rates can make an enormous impact on the tax demands from the housing portfolio point of view. A 1% or 2% interest rate hike can have implications for the municipality of up to \$1 billion within a single year. How can it absorb those kinds of increases and how can the taxpayer absorb those kinds of increases without forcing the burden back on the people who most likely cannot meet the costs of their own housing in the first place?

This government's foray into cutbacks has been met with approval by many people. What is troubling, though, is that many of the supporters I have talked to have been quite mean-spirited, almost gleeful about the fact that victims of cutbacks were to blame for the fact that their political masters once thought their jobs were usefully created. I have heard others blame a single mother in their community for taking welfare even though she had a boyfriend, and they were proud for blowing the whistle, but as it turned out, there was no scam. She wasn't

dependent; this was a boyfriend, not a permanent man in her life, and there was no scam. She was hurt by the fact that people in her own community were trying to do this to her and now she feels alienated from her community.

Your own statements and actions have encouraged this mentality. In recent discussions I've had with some of your supporters within Metro there has been denial and then puzzled surprise when they realize that there may be significant increases in their taxes, that their waited-for provincial tax relief is probably going to come out of their own pocket and then some. You have probably begun to hear from some of these people.

There is an overwhelming and depressing obliviousness to humanitarian values by this government, values that have been embraced by the political leadership of this province since the Rebellion of 1837, including the governments of Leslie Frost, John Robarts, Bill Davis, Larry Grossman, David Peterson and Bob Rae. I think that's it.

We are more than a tangle of wires in an electrical panel. We are not greedy taxpayers looking for relief. We are people who have elected governments from whom we expect reasonable and humanitarian leadership and responsible democratic government, and we would be happy to engage in processes that lead to addressing our common community needs, including the need to lower the deficit.

You say you are looking for real proposals to amend this legislation but that amalgamation will proceed. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand that this means you will not change your position substantively, although the problems with Bill 103 are substantive ones.

My recommendation is that this government reverse direction and look for ways in which we can revitalize democratic processes for the people living in Metropolitan Toronto. Its citizens are bright enough to solve the problems. It's our tax money and we are certainly motivated to save it where we can without jeopardizing our values. Please uphold our values and fight for them.

If you continue to insist on eliminating a level of government, it would be best to eliminate the government of Metropolitan Toronto.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. I'll go to Mr Gilchrist for a quick comment or question.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** Thank you, Mr Dewdney. I have just a couple of quick points arising from your presentation. Since 1988, all citizens of Metro Toronto have in fact been voting Torontonians. You've addressed some points from your perspective as a Toronto Islander. What changes if Victoria Park disappears as an internal boundary, in terms of your community? The city of Toronto voted for the Spadina Expressway. There was no local support in terms of the city governments to stop that initiative. It was people who stopped that, people in the community.

The powers of the community council: It is absolutely within the purview of the new council to give them the final say on all zoning matters that affect individual communities, to the point that you would have greater local authority than you've ever had in your history. Of course, with only seven or eight councillors, that's smaller than the current 17 in the city of Toronto, only

half the number of people you'd have to convince of the merits of your case.

The final point I'd throw out is that this bill doesn't make Metro Toronto one person more populous or one square foot larger, and in fact we already have an integrated city delivering 72% of the services. This simply moves the last 28% of services to a coordinated level as well.

**Mr Dewdney:** I don't think the remaining 28% are simply services in the same way that the other 72% are services. You're talking about hard services on one hand, but you're talking about planning matters on the other, the services that most matter to the communities and to the residents of those communities.

When you talk about the Spadina Expressway and how the city of Toronto didn't stop it, yes, it was people that killed Spadina Expressway, but it was people essentially in the path of the expressway in the city of Toronto who were able to kill it. Put that into a bigger context and it's going to be a much harder job to stop it. The arithmetic is very simple and dramatic. I don't think you have to be a rocket scientist to understand that one.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Dewdney, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### DAVID DOMET

**The Chair:** Would David Domet please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Domet:** Thank you, Mr Chairman, and thank you to the committee for providing me with this opportunity to appear today.

The bill which this committee is examining is of great importance to the people of this city, indeed this province.

I am the chairman of an Etobicoke city hall committee, I also chair the Assembly Hall restoration project task force, and I am on the board of directors of the Lakeshore Arts Committee and the Lakeshore Ratepayers' and Residents' Association. I am a former board member of the Lakeshore area multiservice project. I coach baseball with Queensway Minor Baseball Association, and I've been active in a number of community projects, including the arts, with the sacred music society and the Etobicoke Symphony Orchestra. I guess you could describe me as a community-minded person and therefore qualified to appear before this committee with respect to this bill and the future of Etobicoke and Toronto.

Regretfully, I have no props or hats, I won't be singing today, I won't be crying any tears for the cameras, nor will I tear up a copy of the bill. But I will provide this committee with numerous reasons to support this bill for one Toronto calmly, rationally and without any hyperbole or hysterics, which are becoming a bit extreme and, frankly, silly.

As mentioned earlier, I hail from the city of Etobicoke. You've all heard of Etobicoke, the city that spends, according to my sources at city hall, over a quarter of a million dollars to find they don't have the will to fire an unaccountable bureaucrat for allegedly spending expense money inappropriately, according to an independent audit. But then, why should he be fired? The council provided no guidance for years to any of the senior staff about

limits or what were and what were not appropriate expenditures. In fact, the real reason, in my opinion, that councillors refused to take action is because many of them took part in the party at the trough, the trough filled with my money and the money of other taxpayers in Etobicoke.

Now what do we have but more money for a plebiscite that will be at best unscientific and at worst inaccurate.

#### 1000

You don't have to take my word for it. The good burghers of the various councils are free to consult with Angus Reid and others as to the truth of my statement. The biased question, with the word "mega," is an insult to the democratic process and an indication, in my opinion, of everything that is wrong with these cities, with these councils and why they have to go.

In fact, just two days ago, the city of Toronto sent 90 ballots to deceased persons, and in East York 100 ballots were found in a garbage can. In Scarborough the letter from the mayor exhorts the citizens to vote No, and in North York the interactive telephone vote allegedly explains how to vote No, but not Yes. Democracy? Hardly. How any rational, logical, level-headed citizen can trust this system of voting is laughable. How can the result be taken seriously? After all, the ballots are being counted by an organization that only wants the vote to go one way. Where are the scrutineers for those who support amalgamation?

Please note that although Etobicoke council has found money to waste in this plebiscite and the Deaves investigation, it can't find less than a quarter of that amount to keep wading pools open next summer.

Where is the accountability local cities are supposedly famous for?

In the city of York, well, we all know the scoundrels — the scandals, and scoundrels I guess, on their council. And Toronto: What the city of Toronto council does not seem to realize is that the multitude of frankly dumb decisions, from banning the Salvation Army and the Barenaked Ladies to boycotting burger chains and planting trees in the middle of the road as well as in Central America, has an effect on the rest of Metro. As a citizen of Metropolitan Toronto I find it embarrassing and I'm tired of it. I'm tired of all the small-town, parochial, élitist attitudes of most of these municipal politicians and past politicians, and experts from areas privileged by unfairly low property taxes.

Those of us who support amalgamation love our communities just as much. We care about the future of Toronto just as much. We are just as proud to live in the world's most livable city and we have every right to appear here and state it.

It may come as a surprise to some, but in the three lakeshore communities we care just as much about the cleanliness of the Don River. It's just that we have the Humber River, Mimico Creek, Etobicoke Creek as well as our lakefront to concern ourselves with. That is why in our community we have an organization known as the Citizens Concerned About the Future of the Etobicoke Waterfront.

Is Metro any better than the six municipalities? Hardly. Last year I sat on a committee to plan events for the

opening of the Waterfront Trail. As David Crombie was entering Etobicoke from Mississauga, we planned a number of activities including raising Etobicoke's new flag. But how could we have been so foolish? The event was taking place in Marie Curtis Park, a Metro Park, and believe it or not, Metro bureaucrats refused to allow us to fly Etobicoke's flag.

While we are on the subject of Metro, we have in my community, on the grounds of the former Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital, a beautiful new park that is partly Metro parks, partly Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and partly the city of Etobicoke. Have the opponents of amalgamation ever come by to see how the grass is cut? Metro workers literally stop and create a line in the grass because, "Over there, well, that's Etobicoke."

Duplication, waste and inefficiency. The mayors of the six cities have acknowledged this themselves. A miracle occurred last December, if you'll pardon the expression: The mayors finally agreed there is duplication. They acknowledged that if we just kill Metro, then we can sell services to each other and end duplication.

Well, why stop there? You're still left with six governments and six councils. We have one TTC, one water provider. Why seven parks departments and planning departments and roads departments? Of course, roads are another problem; you know, different snowplows for different roads because of jurisdiction. If we have one police service and one ambulance service, why seven fire departments? There's only one taxpayer.

In 1953, the first step in amalgamation of Toronto took place with the formation of the Metro level of government. Today 72% of all municipal services are already delivered by Metro. How can we, as taxpayers, justify the amount spent by the six local municipalities in increased cost and inefficiency for the remaining 28%?

Everyone likes to recall how often Metro has been studied by international experts, but these days are in the past, and those who applaud them are living in the past. No one is studying us now.

From my introduction you know I'm active in my community. If I genuinely believed Bill 103 would do anything to endanger the quality of life in my community or this city, I would be fighting its passage. But on the contrary I believe that amalgamation is the culmination of a vision dating back generations and that it will lead to stronger community identity, greater political accountability and eventually less cost and lower taxes for ratepayers.

I am proud to say that I live in the original New Toronto. It is sandwiched between Mimico and Long Branch. You see, 30 years ago we were amalgamated into Etobicoke, but we didn't disappear. In fact, we have kept our identity in spite of Etobicoke. Etobicoke is not a community, nor is Scarborough or North York. They are governing structures. But Swansea, West Hill, The Beach, Parkdale, Islington and Agincourt and so on are communities. None of these communities or neighbourhoods disappeared 30 years ago, and they won't with Bill 103.

According to people I have spoken with about the debate 30 years ago, the biggest concern was the community disappearing. It didn't happen then and it won't happen now. Our cities are made up of communities and

neighbourhoods — people. Changing the governing structure will not change where it is I come from or what community projects I choose to be involved with. People will work on local parades or festivals, they will still participate in Neighbourhood Watch and police-community liaison committees, and they will continue to serve on countless municipal boards and committees because they care, not because it happens to be Etobicoke, Scarborough or North York.

What of accountable politicians who can be reached by phone or seen in the local market? I really doubt that this will change. All across Metro now we have accessible and inaccessible municipal politicians. Those who are not accessible will have to face the voter as always. A good councillor will do what is necessary to serve his or her constituents.

Connected with accountability, I would like to speak from some experience in managing a municipal election campaign. In 1994 I managed a campaign for a Metro council candidate. Unfortunately we were not successful, but what continues to stay in my memory is the apathy and the confusion of the average voter as to the difference between the two councillors and what they were responsible for.

We all know that voter turnout for municipal elections is extremely low, but I suggest that if many examine the figures, you'll find that compared to those who vote for a city councillor, even fewer will vote for their Metro councillor. This is not accountability and this is not good democracy. The role of the two levels of municipal governance no longer serves the people of Toronto, and it seems to me it has become the other way around.

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Domet. We're coming to the end of your time. Could you wrap up?

**Mr Domet:** Okay. Thank you. I would like to just go to property assessments for a moment if I could, Mr Chairman. I believe they need to be changed and uniform across the GTA. We have seen time and time again that Metro municipalities have refused to update to a fairer system of taxes. The city of Toronto has kept residential property taxes artificially low for 40 years, and they have been able to do this through a large commercial base. It's also been at the expense of apartment tenants who pay a higher level of property tax in their rent than some homeowners.

Some people have said: "Slow down and get it right. Study amalgamation more." Great believers in democracy, I guess. But slow down? Why? For more study and more commissions, more waste of time and resources for a report that will state the inevitable, that amalgamating seven governments into one not only makes fiscal sense but common sense?

This committee has before it legislation that will take this city to the next logical stage in its development. Be bold. Support this bill for amalgamation. Take the step that will put Toronto on the path for a new era of growth, a new era of prosperity, and through this prosperity new hope for our rivers and streams, our children and seniors, our commercial and industrial base, our entertainment centres and the livability of Toronto. Thank you for permitting me to make this presentation.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Domet, for coming forward and making your presentation.

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## NORM KELLY

**The Chair:** Norm Kelly is next. Good morning, Mr Kelly. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Norm Kelly:** I'm going to apologize beforehand. I've been out almost every evening holding meetings on these topics and my throat is beginning to display visible wear and tear. But that notwithstanding, I'll give it my best shot this morning.

The first thing I want to say is that I am not here to defend or promote megacity, and that's because no megacity is being proposed. The boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto will not be enlarged. The population will not increase. Government and its bureaucracy will be getting smaller, leaner and lighter. So megacity is obviously a misnomer and the accurate term, I would suggest, and the one I use in my public meetings is unified city. I sit before you as a staunch supporter of the government's proposal to create a unified city out of Metro's seven jurisdictions.

I think there are three critical challenges that face the people of Metropolitan Toronto. They are: tight money, a middle-aged infrastructure, and the sudden appearance of international competition that has resulted from the introduction of free trade.

The tight money of course is a product of senior levels of governments trying to cope with their indebtedness and cutting back on their programs to the city in whole or in part.

The middle-aged character of the city of Toronto has left its roads, its bridges, its subway systems and the sewer and waste pipes under our roads, frankly and very dramatically, in a state of unrepair. Our chief general manager of the Toronto transit system and our commissioner of transportation have informed the planning and transportation committee of Metropolitan Toronto, of which I'm a member, that to bring this aging infrastructure into a state of good repair is going to cost at least \$50 million a year.

With respect to economic competition, we all know through our history classes that the city of Toronto grew and thrived behind high tariff barriers that were first introduced by Sir John A. Macdonald and his national policy back in the 1870s. Those tariff barriers, if they haven't vanished, are rapidly being pulled down brick by brick as this government and preceding governments at the national level are trying to create free trading zones, not only in North America but most recently in Asia as well. As it happens, not if it happens, the cold, cruel winds of economic change are going to be sweeping through this city and we are going to have to make sure we're capable of withstanding them.

I imagine it's going to take at least another \$50 million a year to invest in a new superstructure. It was embarrassing, the debate we had at Metro over the construction of the Sheppard subway, that on-again, off-again, decision-making process that embarrassed us all, and all we got out of it was a subway from Yonge Street to Fairview Mall. Ladies and gentlemen, we have to take that subway from Fairview into Scarborough Town Centre. We also have to take it to the two focal points around which

business is growing in the new age, and that's our universities and our airports. I think we need new infrastructure, rapid transit very quickly sent out to York University and out to our airport.

When you add those challenges together, of tight money, middle-aged city and international free trade and the competition that results from it, I would guess that this city needs an additional \$150 million to \$200 million per year to deliver the services that are required in those three areas and to protect and enhance the quality of life for the people of Metropolitan Toronto.

My question to you and my question to everyone at the meetings I go to is: Where do you get the money? If you need \$150 million to improve the infrastructure, build new infrastructure and maintain the delivery of services at the Metropolitan level, and by that I mean policing, transportation, services to seniors, the disadvantaged, children, where do you get the money? You don't get it from senior governments because they're part of the problem. You don't get it from taxpayers because they won't pay, or you might get residential taxpayers to pay but the commercial taxpayers will simply pack up and leave.

Where is the only source of money? And I'll tell you, the money is there. It hit me during the Sheppard debate, as I was suffering through the embarrassment of voting for it and against it on an on-again, off-again basis, that we had the money to build the Sheppard subway, and not only that but half a dozen lines as well. The money is there. The taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto in their gross tax expenditures give governments enough money to do all the things that we have to do to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The trouble is, it's locked up in the redundancies of the six local governments.

Generally, when we speak about redundancy or duplication of service, we're talking about the duplication of service between the two tiers. I would argue, based on my experience, that there isn't very much duplication between the two tiers. Some of the departments may carry the same names but they're not performing the same service. The real duplication, ladies and gentlemen, is vertically among six local governments delivering through their administrative services exactly the same service.

Mel Lastman can stand in front of you and he can say, "North York's a tight ship." Frank Faubert can stand in front of you and say, "Scarborough's a tight ship." Every mayor can legitimately come before this committee and say, "We run an efficient, tight ship." Ladies and gentlemen, they're absolutely right. The waste, though, comes when you look at them collectively. That's where the redundancy is. They're all doing the same thing.

The six local governments of Metropolitan Toronto have a budget of \$1.5 billion. If we can fold those six governments in, marry them with the Metropolitan government, if we can obtain a 10% saving as a result, there's your \$150 million, or maybe even more, \$200 million.

A number of people have argued that this is a cost-saving, tax-reducing exercise. My reading and my experience would suggest otherwise. I do not think that the ultimate outcome of amalgamation and this exercise will save taxes for the residents and the businesses of

Metropolitan Toronto. This is an exercise in the reallocation of funds within the Metropolitan complex.

The demand for services, with all due respect to my local colleagues, is not at the local level; it's at the regional level. The demand for policing, the demand for transportation, the demand for services for seniors, for the disadvantaged, for children, that's where the demand is. If the fire is over here and the water is down there, you've got to bring the water to the fire. You've got to unlock the money that's tied up in the redundancies of the six local governments and you must reallocate it and put it to service for the people of Metropolitan Toronto at the regional level.

**The Chair:** Mr Kelly, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up. You're coming towards the end of your allotted time.

**Mr Kelly:** A lot of people are surprised at amalgamation. "Where the heck did this idea come from? It's just whacked us from the side." We have been amalgamated since 1953. Amalgamation has been a constant experience in the political life of this city and we have experienced incremental amalgamation since 1953. We are 75% amalgamated. I tell people in my riding that I sit on the amalgamated government of Metropolitan Toronto.

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I hear critics saying: "Where are the studies? Where are the studies that prove this is the right thing to do? Where are they?" You know, the typical Canadian bureaucratic response to change, "Where are the studies?" Well, ladies and gentlemen, we don't have to study amalgamation anywhere else around the world. We don't have to look anywhere for inspiration or guidance. We have lived amalgamation for 44 years and we've lived it successfully.

#### *Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Mr Kelly, thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation today.

**Mr Kelly:** That's it? Any questions?

**The Chair:** You have no time available. Sorry. Would Adrian Heaps come forward, please. No? Milton Berger?

#### MILTON BERGER

**The Chair:** Good morning, Mr Berger. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Milton Berger:** Thank you, Mr Chairman and the members of the committee, for giving me this opportunity to come and address the committee on this very important issue. I would like to start off by saying that I'm surprised this government is bringing in this legislation because I know that is not the Conservative way. Conservatives believe in preserving existing institutions and not destroying them. My understanding of Progressive Conservatism is that you keep existing structures as the foundation and build on them. However, if this proposal is approved, you will be destroying instead of preserving institutions which have been in existence for many, many years.

I've heard arguments from the government that the reason this is being done is to streamline and reduce duplication. The only duplication that I know of, and I'll disagree with the previous person who addressed you here, exists at the Metro level of government. I have been

in both governments, and Mr Shea will affirm that, not only for one term but for two terms of one government alone. But I've been in both and I know where the duplication is.

**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** I wonder why he's smiling.

**Mr Berger:** Yes.

**Mr Derwyn Shea (High Park-Swansea):** I like duplicates.

**Mr Berger:** Well, I'll get on to that. Our council, that is, the city of North York, made a resolution way back to eliminate the duplication which exists in Metro government, but somehow nobody seems to want to listen. Therefore, if you really want to reduce duplication, eliminate the Metro government. That's the only way because it's the only place where duplication exists within the cities of Metropolitan Toronto.

As a matter of fact, we had a committee called COMLAC, Committee of Metro Local Area Councils. Unfortunately, I see John Hastings is not here. He was there at that committee and he knows. The members all agreed that the extra baggage is Metro government. I'm sure the elimination of the Metro government would be acceptable to 99% of the residents of Metropolitan Toronto.

Local councils have been sensitive to the financial burden of the taxpayers. Metro has not been so successful. I can only speak for the council I'm a member of and, as the city of North York, we have been frugal. We have not increased taxes for the past five years. You can't say that about Metro — 21% increases. I have never received any complaints from my constituents that the city's portion of their taxes is too high. The complaints I receive are not about the city's portion but the rest of the taxes on their bill.

What is bothering me is, this government, instead of recognizing the city's good management, is recommending punishing them by eliminating them. I hear comments such as, "Why should we have six fire departments when one will do?" Well, picture it. What are you going to do? Close down the fire stations and create a safety problem? I'm sure you're not going to do that. So what are you going to do? You keep those stations and have a fire chief of one big city. Are you going to create six district chiefs? We have them now in the police force, so instead of six you become seven. Where's the reduction in saying, "We've kept one, but we have six"? You can have seven.

Two speakers previously mentioned, "Well, Metro is already doing 72% of the job. Why do we need the seven municipalities? We can put another 28% in the same place." The 72% they are doing is not even the government. All they do is, once a year they look over the budget. They have commissions and boards, the TTC, the police commission, the conservation authority, that do whatever. The budget is presented once a year and the government of Metro approves it. Do you need a government for that? So don't tell me, "Just give it to them." You don't need the Metro government at all because all those things that are existing now, that 72% could be saved, local municipalities could maintain and look after them. All they have to do is approve budgets.

When you hear people saying there's too much government, and that's what I hear them saying, "There is too much government. Get rid of them," what they mean is too many bureaucrats. They're not talking about politicians. Too many politicians is a terrific selling product since the public in general do not respect politicians — all politicians, not only municipal but provincial and federal as well, unfortunately. It's a good selling tool and I don't blame the government for coming out and saying: "Get rid of politicians. There's too many of them."

The question is, how many are too many? In North Bay, for example, there's one councillor for 5,300 people, whereas in North York there's a councillor for approximately 40,000 people. So what is too many? If you truly believe that you have to eliminate politicians, and that's what you keep on preaching, then reduce some of the politicians. There are the 32 right there in Metro whom you can eliminate and nobody will miss them. That would solve your problem by the thing you're proposing, to eliminate politicians. That's where the duplication exists.

If you believe that eliminating cities in order to reduce politicians will save money, do you really know what the savings would be? I know in North York the cost to taxpayers for maintaining their councillors per population is \$2.84 annually. Is that the savings you're telling the public when they say, "Get rid of politicians"? Because \$2.84 is the cost to maintain a councillor in North York for the citizens of North York.

We have heard comments that the councillors only care about themselves and about their positions; that's what they worry about and that's why they come and oppose amalgamation. Some do, some care only for themselves, but they rarely get re-elected.

We have heard that communities don't change and nothing will disappear. Nothing happened in Swansea and Mimico. Those are the examples I keep on hearing. What municipalities are we talking about? They were little villages of 15 or 20 blocks with a fountain or two ponds in the centre. They were not cities. They were not viable cities like North York, Scarborough or the city of Toronto. Even then, how many people really know Swansea? Maybe the ones who were there in the 1950s, but if you ask any of your children, your grandchildren or whatever: "Swansea? Swansea who?" It disappeared; it did not exist. So don't tell me — maybe Shea knows. He lives there, but —

**Mr Shea:** You were getting my attention there.

**Mr Berger:** But really, how many know about it? So don't mix them up and say people don't care. They do.

The cities of North York, Toronto, Scarborough that we're talking about here are real cities, not villages and not little places. You can't compare them to Swansea which is just a few blocks with a pond. It would have gone bankrupt and would have been eliminated anyway. You don't hear about eliminating Pittsburgh, Philadelphia or Munich to make it economically viable. Everyone's talking about economics. Everybody has become an economist suddenly? Economists who've got degrees don't know anything about economics, but now we've got all these amateurs, all economists, and they embrace big city and everybody's coming running down here and

doing business, improving business. Who are you fooling?

The argument you hear is that they have a good product. I'm saying improved economics only happens if you have a good product. It can be on top of a mountain or a little cottage or a little shack, they'll come and come and come and ask to do business with you. If you haven't got the product — it has nothing to do with the cities, big, small, whatever, and the argument telling me you have to amalgamate so that the economics would be improved, that's a lot of — I don't want to say what it is.

Why make changes and spend money unnecessarily just for the sake of change? None of the arguments for change hold water. Therefore, Mr Chairman and members of the committee, I'm asking you to recommend to the minister to drop this and abandon this legislation, which I don't think is the right one. It's not reasonable. It has no merit of any kind. Thank you.

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**The Chair:** Thank you. Mr Colle or Mr Sergio, you have a minute for questions.

**Mr Colle:** I just want to comment. You maligned Mimico, and the Speaker has come down here to respond to that.

**Mr Berger:** That's okay. They live there; they know it. Maybe they thought, "Fine," but average people don't know. Mimico has gone and Swansea has gone. It's maybe an address and you tell your friends, "You know where I live? It's in that little square," but it's not known as really a real place. You can't compare it with North York or Scarborough or Etobicoke.

**Mr Colle:** I'll leave it to your former colleague here.

**Mr Sergio:** Mr Chairman, I'd like to welcome Councillor Berger and also Councillor Severino from the city of North York.

Just quickly, because we have less than one minute here, previous speakers also have recommended that we don't need any more studies, we've had enough studies, whatever. No previous study has recommended what this government is recommending now. No study. The Crombie, the Golden, the Trimmer, every other study did not recommend the elimination of both municipal and Metro governments. Do you think you can make an informed decision when the province has failed to give you the facts on their proposal: no figures, no information, no statistics?

**Mr Berger:** This is exactly where I think I ended, Mr Sergio. That's why I ended saying there's no reason to do anything, because the proposal is not there telling us that we need change. It hasn't been sold to anybody that change is required or needed.

As a matter of fact, I heard a previous speaker telling you that since 1953, they have been amalgamated. In 1953, we were amalgamated; it was a confederation. We needed each other. Metro as we know it today, all the cities, there were no trunk sewers, there were no roads, there were no subways, no transportation. We came and built them together as a federation. That's done.

**Mr Sergio:** Do you think amalgamation will save you money?

**Mr Berger:** Save you money? It will cost you money.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Berger, for coming forward this morning.

### RICH WHATE

**The Chair:** Would Rich Whate please come forward. Good morning, Mr Whate. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Rich Whate:** Good morning. I'd like to thank the committee for this opportunity to speak. I work with the Toronto Environmental Alliance and am speaking today as an environmentalist and concerned citizen of Toronto. I studied in university for a science degree to continue what I felt was an admirable 25-year legacy of environmental protection in Ontario. Now my career has changed from continuing that achievement of environmental protection to fighting this government to keep what's left.

In the past year, the Ontario government has severely "reformed" or slashed environmental regulations in our province. Now it appears Bill 103 will also wreak havoc on municipal and community environmental bylaws and programs. My concern is this: Who is going to work to protect our environment?

Over the past year, I have seen this government trash environmental regulation in Ontario. Their Responsive Environmental Protection document this fall, for example, justified reforming 80 environmental regulations in the name of "creating jobs and increasing economic vitality in our province." What reforming actually translates to is gutting half of the 80 policies. Regulations monitoring pesticide licensing, pulp and paper effluent standards and air quality are just some that have been weakened and replaced with voluntary industry practices.

I could easily continue speaking to the provincial issue, but I'm here to focus on municipal concerns. As I'm sure you can appreciate, our environment does not respect political or regional boundaries, so separating issues is often impossible. In my work with the Toronto Environmental Alliance, I have come to appreciate, and in fact depend on, two things that are only possible through local government. They are (1) the power and concern of municipal governments in passing environmental bylaws, and (2) the dedication and creativity of locally supported community groups to act and influence environmental initiatives.

Firstly, as a municipal context, the city of Toronto banned incineration and passed anti-idling legislation. East York has banned pesticide use on their parkland. These bylaws are examples of distinct municipal efforts within the larger community of Metro, but they didn't come about easily. They required negotiations and political pressures which only occurred by having local groups, such as the Toronto Environmental Alliance, and citizens work with their councillors. I've seen at first hand that working with local councillors is a lengthy process. It can be successful, but with a massive mega-constituency that they're proposing, this cooperation with councillors and citizens becomes difficult, if not impossible.

Secondly, as a community context, the Toronto Transit User Group, Task Force to Bring Back the Don, the Bikes Mean Business conference, and countless local recycling initiatives are citizen-driven initiatives that have come through support from individual municipalities.

These are examples of individuals who were supported to do very specific and very effective environmental projects in their neighbourhoods. Again, representation from municipal government becomes a concern if these programs are to continue.

So let me emphasize the impact that Bill 103, to me, will have on these initiatives, municipal bylaws and community programs that have been working to protect our environment. Amalgamating will tighten the purse-strings of a mega-Toronto, and a cash-strapped Toronto will be forced to seek lowest-common-denominator environmental policies. Although we all share the same environment, we function and relate differently within it. These varied interests, and I mean the interests of the different municipalities, will not be given attention, or due attention. Lone municipal policies like incineration bans in the city of Toronto or pesticide policies in East York will be lost because a huge cash-strapped government cannot listen to individuals and will bow to the greater concerns of the other municipalities.

The loss of these programs, in combination with the provincial deregulation I spoke of, means the death of environmental considerations for all of us. And if this has all been done in the name of job creation and economic vitality, as the government proposed in their Responsive Environmental Protection document, well, congratulations, because as someone working on behalf of all of us for our environment, I've sure got a job to do. To that end, with some levity but with all seriousness, I'd like to finish my submission, for the record, with an invoice to Mr Harris and his cabinet for my services for the next 25 years.

"To: The Ontario government

"From: An Ontario citizen

"For doing the work of the province, municipalities and industry to monitor and regulate pollution control and improve the health of our environment in Ontario."

Bill 103 will destroy municipal environmental initiatives. It's the final nail in the Ontario environment's coffin. If your government is not going to reduce pollution and environmental exploitation through regulation, and we all know putting it in the voluntary hands of industry is a recipe for disaster, then I guess you expect ordinary citizens like myself and all of us here to take responsibility for environmental protection in Ontario. Well, as I said before, that's a big job and we expect to be paid for it.

**Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold):** From time to time, I've been able to sit in on the committee and listen to presentations. Again, there have been people from sectors of our community that have brought insights into this whole issue and debate that are quite fascinating.

You make reference and you poke a little fun, somewhat satirically, at the job creation effectiveness of sort of deregulating environmental — well, not deregulating environmental protection; taking the protection out of the environment. You're right. These guys talked about that as a job creation program, throwing our environment to the wind and will of a corporate world that could give a tinker's dam at the end of the day. Is there anything about the environmental attack that in your mind is truly significant when it comes to creation of jobs?

**Mr Whate:** I'm not sure I understand.

**Mr Kormos:** Is there anything about the deregulation of environmental protection that creates work, real work?

1040

**Mr Whate:** It definitely creates work for myself and those of us who are struggling to uphold or enforce some of the changes that are coming about. I work on a local level — that's our mandate at TEA — but increasingly we're working harder and harder on the provincial level to try to keep some of those regulations from existing.

Jobwise, what I foresee indirectly, like the Ministry of Environment massive job cuts, is what they propose to be more environmental jobs for the industry to create environmental departments, which I think is grossly misleading. I don't think that's proven to ever be the case.

What I've seen increasingly in the past two years is more and more people like myself struggling for what little funds are left and doing more and more work. So I would say that there's nothing about job creation in terms of numbers, but perhaps job creation in terms of pure work that's there for us.

**Mr Kormos:** I don't see that as common sense; I just see it as plain stupid.

**Mr Whate:** I would agree.

**Mr Kormos:** That was just an interjection on my part. You clearly, like hundreds and thousands of others — and people have been coming here talking about community. I suppose the one good thing about this government's attack on community is that it has forced people to think about community in a way that maybe a whole lot of us haven't for a decade or two or three. People are coming here speaking very eloquently and beautifully, incredible insights into what community is, as I say, in a way that maybe, because of the way our lives and our economy have forced people to look for work desperately, we haven't been able or we haven't been inclined to focus on community. What is driving the government in forcing megacity on these communities here in this area, in your view?

**Mr Whate:** What's driving it is opening Ontario for business, which is a quote that Premier Harris has used in the past. I think the driving force behind amalgamation is that ultimately what will happen or seem to happen in cash-strapped Toronto is that as municipalities get loaded on, they will have to consider scrapping more and more services. An amalgamation ultimately I think would put the cities in a position to have to decide whether or not to sell off these services and privatize. A megacity having one fire department instead of seven definitely makes selling off the fire department easier. I'm not saying that the fire department's what they'll attack, but I think hidden behind most of the rhetoric and the Common Sense Revolution of the Harris government is the privatization agenda. I think privatization and environmental concerns often conflict and have never proven to go hand in hand. So I think they're setting us up for that.

**The Chair:** Sorry to interrupt. Mr Whate, we've come to the end of your allotted time but I want to thank you for coming forward.

**Mr Kormos:** Are you sure I had all three minutes?

**The Chair:** You sure did. A little bit beyond, actually, Mr Kormos. I want to thank you for coming forward to make your presentation to the committee this morning.

### RANJIT SINGH CHAHAL

**The Chair:** Would Ranjit Singh Chahal please come forward. Good morning, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Ranjit Singh Chahal:** I was sick actually with the flu and food poisoning the last three or four days so I have got a sore throat, but I'll try to do my best.

I'm here to present my ideas for the megacity, supercity, whatever you say. I say the city of Toronto rather than just a collection of six municipalities. I was delighted when the government of Ontario announced that this innovative idea would be put in action for the betterment of the city of Toronto and its people.

Toronto has been called the best international city in the world in which to work and raise a family. It's safe, prosperous. But today, the great metropolitan regions of the world must move forward just to be able to maintain their international capabilities. The six different cities are fighting against each other when it comes to attracting the Olympics or world fairs etc.

Recent studies have concluded that Toronto is not growing as fast as cities that compete against us for jobs today; for example, as I said earlier, North York applying for the Olympic Games alone and the city of Toronto applying for something else, and none getting anywhere. The new city of Toronto will grow and create new jobs, since all the regions as one will pull forces together rather than just competing against each other.

Six cities don't work together. For example, last year the city of North York advertised that if you don't live in North York — this is an example I read in the Globe as well as in the Star — and your car breaks down in North York and it catches fire, if the fire brigade is called in, then the owner of the car has to pay. That is silly. A person living in Etobicoke, a resident of the city of Etobicoke and working in Scarborough, has to drive through North York, and if the car breaks down, you know what can happen. This again looks like a silly idea. In the new city, the one city, the resident and the businessman and the commuter would be living in one city. Six different cities doesn't make sense.

It is too bad that Mike Harris didn't include even Mississauga or beyond. I lived in Kingston for many years. I lived in — it's called a township, the township of this, the township of that — Kingston township. I was never in the city yet the address was the city of Kingston.

A unified Toronto will have more clout internationally and will have a better chance of attracting investment to the area and boosting the local economy. This is good news for small businesses. When the local economy is strong and its people have jobs, they spend money in their communities and their businesses, and that would be thriving for the new city of Toronto. For small business licensing, a person has to deal with one organization only and can start business anywhere in the big city, not to go to six different places.

In 1966, for example, the provincial government reduced the number of municipalities from 13 to six by creating the city of Toronto and the five other boroughs like North York, Scarborough, Etobicoke, York and East York. Although the towns and villages of Forest Hill, Swansea, Mimico, Weston etc have gone as municipal-

ities, they are very much alive today as vibrant, distinct communities. A new city of Toronto will have the same strong communities as in the past, with influence over local decisions. Some people opposing this, like the mayors, I think are fighting for their own jobs rather than saving the money.

**Mr Sergio:** Mel is behind you.

**Mr Chahal:** Oh, sorry, Mr Lastman. I saw your picture on the TV.

**Mr Sergio:** Are you going to take that back now?

**Mr Chahal:** No, I won't take it back. He can be the mayor of the big city. Maybe he would be a bigger man.

In the new city of Toronto the number of politicians will be reduced from 106 to 44, plus one mayor rather than six mayors. This will cut costs drastically. No need to run six city halls any more. The net saving is about \$200 million in each of the first three years, then it will increase to \$300 million per year. The artificial and invisible barriers between current municipalities will be removed while communities and neighbourhoods will be strengthened. Access to local councillors will be the same as before. Local representation will be enhanced.

One government will mean a simpler, more accountable and less confusing system of local government. Rather than having one parking rule in Etobicoke, another in Scarborough, another in North York, it will be one parking rule.

**1050**

Local communities within Toronto will remain distinct. Communities are neighbourhoods which are made by people, not municipal boundaries.

One level of government will save money. It will reduce duplication and overlap. Services will be delivered in the most cost-effective ways.

A new, unified city of Toronto will have more international clout and it will promote the area as a whole. Rather than six different cities competing against themselves, we will be competing against the other big cities like Toronto, attracting big events, attracting big businesses, and that would be good for the people of Toronto and eventually for the province of Ontario.

In conclusion, I would stress that this is a great idea and should be put in action as soon as possible for the sake of Toronto and its people. Thank you very much for paying attention to me.

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Thank you very much. Any questions? No? Okay. Thank you very much for appearing before us.

#### WILLIAM DEVINE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd call on Mr Devine. Good morning, Mr Devine. Welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr William Devine:** Good morning. I'm sorry I don't have anything prepared to distribute to you. I just had time to scratch this out last night and it's indecipherable to anyone but myself, and I even wonder about myself.

To proceed, my name is William Devine. First let me thank the committee for this opportunity to address the amalgamation proposals of Bill 103 which would amalgamate Metro Toronto's five cities and one borough into one Metro-wide unit.

Second, as to whatever credentials I may possess, I've been a resident of North York for the past 15 years. Prior to that, I lived in Toronto since the mid-1950s, having moved here at that time from Hamilton, Ontario. I'm currently retired. I'm also a long-time trade unionist and activist, most recently as a member of the Canadian Auto Workers union. Until recently, I was a delegate to the Metro Toronto labour council where I served on that body's municipal committee for a number of years. However, here I would like to stress that on this occasion I have no mandate to speak on behalf of any organization or anyone other than myself. What follows is a personal presentation on behalf of myself only.

My submission will oppose Bill 103 and its proposals for amalgamation. The sweep of the amalgamation proposals makes it difficult to determine where to start in opposing them, but let us start with the three appointed trustees and the appointed transition team.

Having three non-elected trustees breathing down the necks of elected local councils over anything related to expenditures of \$10,000 or more is offensive on two counts. First, it suggests that the elected councils are not to be trusted, and that if not supervised by non-elected persons, these councils may very well resort to perverse skulduggery. To suggest such is to personally insult both the elected councils and the electors who elected them. Second, and even more importantly, to have non-elected trustees oversee the duly elected councils is a profound insult to democracy. When three non-elected trustees can tell the rest of us through our elected local councils what we can or cannot do, there is something seriously amiss.

What has been said about the non-elected trustees can also be said of the non-elected transition team, but the non-democratic nature of non-elected trustees and the transition team is on a par with the provincial government's whole approach to amalgamation as embodied in Bill 103.

Very shortly, referenda/plebiscites will be held in Metro's six units on the issue of amalgamation, yet the provincial government insists that it will pay no heed to these expressions of the popular will. Make no mistake: There is a clear popular will on this issue. The huge rallies that have been held opposing amalgamation, last Saturday's march, untold letters to the editor, to name just a few manifestations, make it clear there is a popular will opposed to amalgamation. For the provincial government to insist it will pay no attention to this popular will is a denial of democracy. It also defies common sense.

What further defies common sense is how a Metro council reduced to some 44 members, each representing an average of 50,000 constituents, can be more democratic than the current local councils whose current number of members represents a much smaller number of constituents. Surely the essence of democracy is that elected politicians be fully responsible and accountable to those who elect them and that such politicians be as accessible as possible to the electors.

Under Bill 103's amalgamation proposals, such accessibility would be severely curtailed and with it the responsibility and accountability of the politicians despite any given politician's best intentions. Parenthetically it should be noted that the ability of ordinary citizens to run

for local election would also be seriously curtailed. To finance an election campaign covering some 50,000 constituents would be beyond the reach of most. We could very well be in danger of creating a situation in which a wealthy élite would hold sway over the great majority. Has the provincial government considered this possibility, and if so, does it concur with such an eventuality? Bill 103 suggests that it does.

Of course, one can argue that provincial ridings cover more than 50,000 constituents, and federal ridings even more, so why not municipal boundaries? But this would be false reasoning. Our system of government is a three-tiered one: municipal, provincial and federal. As we go upward, we enlarge riding boundaries and reduce the number of those elected. This is supportable because we also differentiate the scope and nature of responsibilities. In this context, municipal governments are in a very real sense the closest to the people. In so many ways we start here, or if municipal governments become less accessible, less responsive, less accountable, we end here. Do we wish to start or do we wish to end?

Indeed, at a time when so much expertise argues that cities are now a key focus for enhanced economic growth, enhanced citizenship and enhanced national prosperity and wellbeing, does it not make common sense to enhance the role of grass-roots local government rather than curtail it?

Of course, it may be argued that the provincial government was also elected and has its duty to fulfil its mandate, but can anyone seriously argue that the mandate of the current provincial government includes the right to ride roughshod over the expressed will of the people? Such a suggestion has nothing in common with common sense.

Can we conclude, then, that nothing should ever change? No, of course not, but change is best accomplished when there is a consensus for change and when change improves rather than detracts. In any change, form is not the first essential, content is, and when it comes to local government the content must be: The more local, the better. Form should accommodate this.

Where should we go from here? I believe the provincial government should take account of the popular will and pause in its amalgamation proposals. If the provincial government is convinced of the merits of its amalgamation proposals, it should substantiate these in much more detail, including its claim of financial savings, which is such a controversial matter. It should then disseminate its arguments widely and invite and accommodate the widest possible public input, allowing enough time for all for a full and considered debate. It should pledge in advance to take account of that debate. Then, in a calm and measured manner, we could all of us determine the road ahead.

## 1100

In anticipation of that debate, or even without it, may I offer a final thought? At present, municipalities are creatures of the province with no constitutional status of their own. But if municipalities are a key component of our future, then municipalities should have a constitutional status to enable an effective say in our future. This seems to me to be correct on its own merit, but the need for such a constitutional status is thrown into sharp relief

by the provincial government's Bill 103, which would enforce amalgamation regardless of what the citizens of the affected municipalities think. And this is not to mention — although mention must be made of it — the province's equally arbitrary intention to download excessive financial responsibilities on to the municipalities with or without their consent.

Reconsider amalgamation. Pay heed to the people. Thank you for hearing me out.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Devine. Mr Parker, you have only a minute for questions.

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** You mentioned constitutional status for municipalities. That interests me. Can you give me more detail on that?

**Mr Devine:** I think it should focus on two main areas. First is the financial capabilities of municipalities to fulfil the role for which their local councils are elected, and that financial capability should not depend on the whim of a senior government; it should be entrenched somehow in legislation that would guarantee municipalities that financial capability.

Second is the question of democracy. With Bill 103, we simply are told we will have no say in the matter regardless of what we do. A constitutional status should be such as to prevent, again, any whims of senior governments from impinging on the rights of municipalities. Municipalities have grown and have changed since the days when the Constitution was written, those horse-and-buggy days. It's a much more sophisticated society in which we live, and municipalities do, I think we'd all agree, have a great role to play and thus should be assured of being able to play that role by having a constitutional status.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Devine. We've run out of time. We appreciate your coming.

## MEL LASTMAN

**The Vice-Chair:** I now call on Mayor Lastman. Good morning, Mayor Lastman, and welcome to the standing committee. As you know, you have 30 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mr Mel Lastman:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and members of the committee. I appreciate having this time to make my submission.

On the megacity proposal, you know where I stand. I don't like amalgamation and I don't like the downloading. You may say that the two aren't linked, but in the public's mind they are. As far as I'm concerned, you should put an end to both of them.

I'm here for the citizens of the city of North York. We want to preserve everything we've worked so hard for: great facilities, great programs, great financial health.

When North York and other municipalities vote no to the megacity, I hope you will go along with the referendum results. I will. But if you don't, please consider the following points.

If you are determined to proceed with this, if you force North York into a megacity even though most of us don't want it, give us a chance to completely analyse the figures. I'm a businessman. Let's see a business plan. You wouldn't buy a pig in a poke. Please don't expect our taxpayers to.

We hear that taxes won't go up because of Bill 103. Then please write it into the bill. Show us a guarantee. Set the mill rate for 1998 now and show us that taxes will on average remain stable and equal across Metropolitan Toronto. Also, don't allow any services to be cut until the new council has had the opportunity to review them, and not before the 1999 budget.

The new council will take office in January 1998. Council members won't have enough time to get a handle on all that's involved. We're not talking one 1998 municipal budget, but six municipal budgets and Metro's, including the complex TTC, police and social services. There won't be enough time to merge, digest and analyse the volumes of information and set the 1998 budget and deal with a new assessment system. It should be up to the new council to say which services stay or go, once they understand the history of these services and why they exist.

Use North York's snow clearing as an example. Before 1984 we had awful problems with snowplows blocking driveways with a three-foot to four-foot mountain of snow after people had just finished shovelling their driveway. I was getting hundreds of calls after every snowfall. People would shovel out their driveways and along would come our snowplow and plug up their driveways with three to four feet of snow, and by the time they tried to clear it, it would freeze; they just couldn't get their car in, couldn't get their car out, and they had spent all that money to clean the snow away from their driveway. It moved me to get our staff to invent a solution that is now the envy of every other city. In the city of North York, we invented the system. We clear every road, every sidewalk, and we never plug a driveway with snow.

You should set some ground rules that will assure the citizens of Metropolitan Toronto that amalgamation won't push taxes up or hurt current services, that the megacity won't destroy their quality of life or create financial hardship. Adding welfare, subsidized housing, TTC, Wheel-Trans and GO Transit, libraries, public health, ambulance, group homes, medication for seniors, nursing homes and assessment costs to the property tax bill will hit our property taxpayers really hard. The closest we can figure is ultimately an automatic 19.4% tax increase when the dust settles. It will add \$624 a year to each Metro taxpayer.

Housing alone will be an extremely difficult burden. The existing subsidized housing stock is rundown. It has been financially neglected. There are no capital reserves for repairs to any of the 98,000 subsidized units in Metropolitan Toronto. We figure we would have to spend over \$100 million every year in new capital costs to repair and maintain these buildings. Not only will we have to repair them, we will have to subsidize them a full 100% while our welfare share will go from 20% to 50%, and we almost went broke at 20% two years ago.

How is the property tax base supposed to carry all these extra costs without raising taxes or cutting services? Municipalities only have one source of revenue, the regressive property tax. Look at what sources the province has: income tax, sales tax, alcohol tax, tobacco tax, gasoline and fuel tax, hotel tax, entertainment tax, land

transfer tax, corporation tax, employer health tax, mining profits tax, lottery profits, fines and penalties, casinos, liquor profits, driver and vehicle licence permits, and there's more. I could go on if you want me to.

The dumping of these extra costs on municipalities will increase property taxes for those who can least afford it: our seniors, the infirm, people on fixed incomes, the working poor and families who are just managing to get by. Everyone who lives in Metropolitan Toronto gets a tax hit.

The provincial government has been saying that Metropolitan Toronto is not growing as fast as rival American cities, that jobs are not being created as quickly, business and industries are leaving, and amalgamation is the only solution. But these problems came about because each successive government, three different governments in the past decade, ignored the real problem: the inequities between the 905 and the 416 areas in the GTA.

Whether Conservative, NDP or Liberals, all have turned their back on Metropolitan Toronto and have treated Metropolitan Toronto shabbily. You've all had a chance to correct this and nobody has done anything about it. You've got to give us a level playing field or the bleeding in Metropolitan Toronto will not stop and the advertising and the promotion will not stop. You know, "The city above Toronto" and "Our taxes are 40% less"? That is continually going on and that's why people are leaving, that's why companies are leaving Metropolitan Toronto.

#### 1110

The province has been giving more in subsidies to areas outside of Metropolitan Toronto than they give to us: In education we get nothing, they get 30%; in health we get 40%, they get 75%; in ambulance services we get 55%, they get 100%. This enables them to say — it's not that they're good managers. They're getting all these grants from you. We're not saying give it to us, because we know you can't afford it. We're saying don't give it to them either. They're grown up now. Why do you keep giving it to them? We keep yelling, please stop. Stop it already. We can't stand it any more.

Now the burden on Metropolitan Toronto is set to increase. The areas outside Metropolitan Toronto don't have big welfare rolls, they don't have large amounts of subsidized housing or they don't have the Toronto transit system to operate. Metropolitan Toronto is where people come for welfare and housing.

The possible loss of services is of concern to all North York citizens. In a megacity of 2.3 million people, I have heard that everyone will get the same service and probably at the lowest level. I've never been through an amalgamation so I don't know, but that's from the things I've read and the things I've heard.

North York has unique services that no one else has, the best services of any city in the world, and that's not an exaggeration: twice-weekly garbage pickup, the snow removal I was talking about. We also make arrangements to do private driveways and walkways for seniors at reasonable prices, because we feel it's very dangerous for people over 55 who are out of shape to get out there and shovel snow. We make arrangements with the senior

citizens: We match them up with a student at a low rate and the student goes out and shovels their driveway and the senior pays them; they do their private driveways and their private walkways. It's worked so well, this program, that we've extended it all year, not for snow in the summertime but to do leaves and odd jobs around the house. It's great for the students — they make an extra few dollars — and it's great for the seniors.

Our playground equipment: I didn't know there were no standards for playground equipment. I was reading a book — it's not the only book I've ever read — and I read where 10,000 kids in Canada are being injured every year using playground equipment. I called our parks commissioner into my office and I said, "What's going on here?" He said, "Leave it with me," and he came back a few days later and he said, "There are no standards." I was stupid too. We were putting concrete floors instead of putting soft floors around the playground equipment so if a kid falls he doesn't break his head, and rough edges — we've already gotten rid of half of our playgrounds in North York, replaced them with safe playgrounds, and we're doing the other half this year. We've set world standards for playground equipment. They even gave me an award for it.

We are the only ones with these elephant vacuum cleaners. If you don't live in North York, you've probably never seen them. They go around and pick up litter all over the place. We want a clean city because people take pride in living in a clean city. They take pride in their homes, they take pride in their communities. These elephant vacuum cleaners work seven months a year. We are the only city, to my knowledge, with them.

There is free skating and free swimming in North York, and we have 16 water parks built or under way. These are more fun than swimming pools. The kids love them. I take my grandchildren to one in North York. There are four right now and the other 12 are under way. They are phenomenal. The kids go under palm trees and the water comes from the bottom, they get on horses and they shoot water at each other, and they just have a ball. It's better than a swimming pool. You get bored after a little while in a swimming pool, but not in these water parks. I don't know of anybody else who has them anywhere in Metropolitan Toronto.

Paper recycling: keeping the market honest. Take a look at what took place. Metro was getting \$16 a tonne and they were doing it for all of us. North York said: "We don't want any part of this. You have a maximum of \$16 a tonne and we are not going to be part of it." The people who were doing the recycling came in to see me and offered us, North York, \$45 a tonne if we joined and they would pay all the other municipalities in Metro Toronto the \$16 a tonne. I said, "Leave it with me," and I started to check around. To make a long story short, because I only have 30 minutes, we worked it up to \$295 a tonne. We let the Metro municipalities know and they threatened to pull out even though they had signed a contract, and they got up to \$240 a tonne. Today they are getting not \$16 a tonne but their bottom price is \$40 a tonne. North York is getting \$140 a tonne because that's our bottom price. But that just shows you that it keeps the market honest by not having one government, one

group, doing all the negotiating. You can put one against the other and come up with better deals.

In a megacity, would our citizens receive an inferior level of service? I don't know. We don't want uniformity if it means we have to lower our standards.

It's almost inevitable that the megacity will bring party politics to the municipal level. I don't see how community interests will be looked after under Bill 103. There is no mention of community councils or how they would work. Could their decisions be overturned by the megacity by a simple majority? I don't know.

If a megacity isn't guaranteed to save any money, why do it? I can't imagine getting rid of all the city halls in a megacity. Will everyone have to go to downtown Toronto for building permits for minor additions, for committee-of-adjustment matters, for marriage licences? If they have to stand in line for six hours, they're liable to change their mind. Planning applications: Can you imagine, for a small little addition, that you have to stand in line for six or seven hours? How are we going to get rid of all these city halls? Are you going to force people from Scarborough, North York, Etobicoke to have to go down to Toronto for a little thing, if they want to get a dog licence or a park permit to play baseball or to register a child for swimming lessons or to play hockey? Imagine the lineups if everyone has to go to one place or even two. Will people have to travel great distances to see their councillor, pay their taxes or attend a public hearing or community meeting?

Look at the transition costs of a megacity: severance pay, merging computer operations etc. This could cost \$150 million. Can we afford to pay this when the province is cutting municipal grants and increasing our costs? Having 2.3 million people would make our megacity larger than six Canadian provinces, larger than all four maritime provinces combined. This would be almost the same size as the province of Alberta.

The city of North York is an efficient city. I believe we are Canada's most efficient. We operate like a business. North York should be the model you look at if you're going to proceed with this. This will be five years that we have had no tax increase, and we have improved our services at the same time. North York collects the taxes, but we only get 15.5% of every dollar.

Our size has enabled us to react quickly to changes to the economy. We began cutting, through attrition, in 1989 and reduced staff by 309 people with no golden handshakes and no layoffs. We saw the problem coming. I took it to council and I recommended 14 different things that should be done. North York council adopted it and we've never, ever laid people off in North York. We've done it the proper way. Let me tell you, I took the same thing to Metropolitan Toronto. They called me an obstructionist and all other kinds of things. They refused to even look at it. The motion was placed and the motion was put, but they didn't act on it. They acted on it after raising taxes by over 16% two years later.

We trimmed expenditures in North York by \$89 million and we don't borrow. We are virtually debt-free. We have almost \$200 million in the bank for all contingencies. These are things we have worked hard for in North York. Our North York taxpayers don't want to lose this in a megacity.

1120

I'm not trying to save my job. I want to save our communities and the community spirit that is so vibrant in the city of North York.

Witness the phenomenal success in the 17-year history of our North York Winter Carnival. Last weekend we had 50 community groups and 1,000 volunteers working together to stage this event for over 125,000 visitors. For three days on seven stages, we provided continuous family activities and top-name entertainment free of charge. Many who attended our winter carnival are children who wouldn't otherwise get to see performers like Sandra Beech, Sharon, Lois and Bram, Underhill and Martini, and Sailor Moon, because their families could never afford the admission price. As a city, we and our corporate partners can give these kids the thrill for free. Events like this put the heart into our community. I don't want to see North York's heart break when special events like this become endangered.

If you are determined to have a megacity, I hope you will implement the following suggestions:

Individual municipalities and hydro commissions must retire all debts prior to amalgamation. Why should the people of North York be punished for having an efficient city by absorbing the debts of the less efficient? Our hydro has no debt.

Set a common, stable hydro rate. If our six utilities amalgamated immediately, North York Hydro customers' rates would go up by 5% by amalgamating while Toronto Hydro customers' rates would go down by 8% because Toronto is one of the highest in the province.

Establish a benchmark standard of services for the megacity. Before embarking on amalgamation, spell out the level of service our city can expect.

The province should pay 100% of the megacity transition costs so as not to force property tax increases. We didn't request this transition, you did, and all our reserves should not go to pay for this. If you are going to go ahead with this, let us save the municipal cash reserves, like the almost \$200 million North York has in the bank, for the taxpayers who paid it initially.

As I said earlier, set the mill rate now for the 1998 budget year, because the new council won't be able to meet the impossibly tight time frame.

Finally, if you are intent on proceeding with this merger on the citizens of Metropolitan Toronto, I hope you won't extend the time by an extra year as has been suggested. Employee morale is low. Staff is suffering from the uncertainty. They are in turmoil not knowing what their futures hold. They are out looking for jobs. As staff leave, many programs may suffer. Dragging this out is not fair to anyone, not to our employees, but especially not to our taxpayers. Just as you know where I stand, they've got to know where they stand.

We must give our taxpayers the services they are paying for. I'm in favour of change, but you don't eliminate the level of government that is closest to the people.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mayor Lastman. Each caucus will have three minutes in which to ask questions.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much, Mayor Lastman. One example you brought to mind is the concern people have that they may be forced to go to some central location, like downtown, to get basic services. But it seems this government isn't quite clear on what they're going to do with the city halls; in order to provide services, they're probably going to leave the city halls open. How are they going to save money if they're going to leave the centres open to provide basic services? The city halls remain. Where are the money savings?

**Mr Lastman:** I have no idea. I can't figure it out. Yes, they'll save on six mayors, they'll save on six department heads, but they'll have to have deputy department heads and people stationed all over the place like the police have and everybody else has. Take a look at ambulance. They operate through Metro. Their cost of administration versus front-line service is 19.4%. Our cost of firefighters, which we look after locally, is 6% administration.

**Mr Colle:** You've mentioned fire services. They always say, "We're going to have just one fire department," but on the other hand, what will probably happen is that they'll have one mega-chief and six district chiefs, as they do with ambulance and other services. Where are the cost savings there?

**Mr Lastman:** I have no idea. I can't figure it out any more. North York has improved its services so much over the years that we just don't want to lose these services. We don't know how you're going to save any money, I really don't, because we have been reducing staff over the last six years. As they retire, as they leave for another job, we just haven't been replacing them. We have been saving an awful lot of money for the taxpayers.

**Mr Sergio:** Mayor Lastman, we have had no information with respect to this proposal, Bill 103. It came as a bomb from the government. The Crombie report did not suggest this, the Trimmer report did not suggest this, no report even came close to suggesting —

**Mr Lastman:** I didn't either.

**Mr Sergio:** And you didn't either. Do you think the government should put aside this law for now, put it in abeyance, go to the people, go to the local municipalities and get the best out of it instead of walking into something about which we have no idea how it's going to work?

**Mr Lastman:** The plan the four mayors came up with I felt was the right one. You don't get rid of the government that's closest to the people. What we suggested was to take the five regional governments and merge them into one. They were supposed to have limited things to do. They were set up to look after things that cross municipal boundaries, but they got into everything and there is duplication, no doubt about it, and the duplication has to go. We've been yelling about that for years, but they are just duplicating everything we're doing.

**Mr Sergio:** Do you think we should have a binding referendum?

**Mr Lastman:** I would like it to be a binding referendum, definitely. I will live by it, and I hope the government will.

**The Vice-Chair:** We move on to the NDP caucus.

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Riverdale):** Thank you for your presentation, Mayor Lastman. I've been worried that I might have to go all the way up to North York to get service, but after your presentation today, it doesn't sound so bad up there. I think you gave some very good reasons about why getting rid of local government is a problem. The kinds of services you're able to offer — you're talking about the real, local, day-to-day, nitty-gritty stuff like snow removal and parking and all that stuff.

My question is related to the referendum. This government has said it is not going to listen to the results. What do you think of that?

**Mr Lastman:** I think it's wrong. I think they should. I think a lot of people are going to take offence. They're going to be offended that if they don't listen to the results — I think the highest percentage will probably come from North York because that's where most of the people can vote.

Let's say we have a snowstorm; there's no problem in North York. You have 10 days to vote; you can vote 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Everybody has their own PIN. You can't duplicate it and you can only vote once. I tried to vote twice; it didn't work. The voice instructs you exactly how to vote. You push your PIN. If you push "Yes," my voice comes on and says, "Are you sure?" No, no, it doesn't. I'm only kidding. I couldn't help that.

1130

**Ms Churley:** The government keeps trying to discredit the whole process. They're saying: "Oh, the mayors are going to count it themselves and it's not a credible process." They're accusing you, in a way almost, of fixing the vote.

**Mr Lastman:** In North York, there's no way that can happen. They have their own PIN and there's no way we know who voted and how. We send them out the PIN. We have the names from the provincial list of assessment and Bell telephone has the PIN. The agreement is that they will not give us the PIN numbers and we will not give them the assessment roll, so nobody will ever know who voted and how they voted. It's an excellent system. It's just phenomenal. People don't have to leave the house. If they wake up at 2 o'clock in the morning and have nothing to do, it takes less than two minutes to vote and you have 10 days to vote.

**Ms Churley:** Do you think all hell is going to break loose if this government doesn't listen to a No result?

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, we have to move on. Your time is up on that question.

**Mr Lastman:** I think it will be awful. I really do.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. We'll move to the government caucus.

**Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel):** Thank you very much, Mr Lastman. I come from Caledon-Orangeville and we've even heard of you up there.

**Mr Lastman:** Have you?

**Mr Tilson:** We have indeed. You're obviously one of our most colourful and well-known mayors of southern Ontario and obviously the voters love you.

**Mr Lastman:** Well, thank you.

**Mr Tilson:** The difficulty is, when you become so well known everybody writes down things that you've said over the years.

**Mr Lastman:** I know. I've seen so many —

**Mr Tilson:** That may cause you some trouble. The difficulty I have is that someone's written down for me some of the things you've said about this topic, in direct contradiction to what you've said in the last decade. I'd like to read some of those quotations and then have you tell us why your mind has changed.

For example, "I have done a lot of soul-searching lately and have come to the conclusion that it is ridiculous for us to have six fire departments, six work departments and six of everything else in Metro. We look like idiots, not amalgamating. Why have we done all these work departments and health departments, all this overlapping? Why do we need all these treasury departments and building departments? The work could all be done out of one big office. It has become painfully clear that our current system of a two-tiered system in Metro Toronto is not working."

It goes on and on. I won't quote it. I'm sure you remember saying it. My question to you is, why have you changed your mind?

**Mr Lastman:** Mr Tilson, it wasn't in the last decade. It was a little longer than that. It was 1984.

**Mr Tilson:** There are some 1995 statements. Do you want me to read some of those?

**Mr Lastman:** Let me answer your first question. I don't want to forget. In 1984 things were different. We had a different Metro chairman. We had things operating in Metropolitan Toronto; they were going smoothly and well. The meetings didn't go on for three days. We didn't have the services we have today in North York. At that time everybody had the same services.

**Mr Tilson:** But some of these quotes are 1995.

**Mr Lastman:** No, no, no.

**Mr Tilson:** Sure they are: "I would like to see a change in Metro — "

**Mr Lastman:** Let me finish my answer, though.

**Mr Tilson:** Well, except that you're saying things in 1984 but you're also saying things even a couple of years ago.

*Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order.

**Mr Lastman:** Go ahead. What did I say in 1995?

**Mr Tilson:** Okay. "I would like to see a redesign of Metro council. There's been so much duplication with the local municipalities. There is so much duplication. Downsizing Metro has not been strong enough," and on it goes.

**Mr Lastman:** I said the same thing here. I said here today that the duplication at Metro is ridiculous. Metro was not set up to do the things they're doing. Here we have planning departments in every municipality. Metro does not do the planning. They only check to verify if the North York plan, for example, meets the Metro plan. They had 99 planners at one point there, which was ridiculous. All they needed was about five or 10.

They went out and duplicated everything the municipalities were doing. I tried to stop this for years. I was yelling and screaming but the province would never listen and we couldn't do anything about it locally. We are a product of the province.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mr Lastman, we've exceeded our time. Thank you very much.

### DANFORTH BY THE VALLEY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Reg McLean, the Danforth by the Valley BIA. Welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Reg McLean:** I want to begin by thanking the provincial government and the members of this committee for allowing me the opportunity to speak here today.

As the chair of Danforth by the Valley Business Improvement Area, I represent about 250 businesses located in the Broadview-Danforth area of the city of Toronto. For those of you not familiar with business improvement areas, or BIAs as they are more commonly known, they are specific geographic areas of any city in the province which through mutual agreement of the majority of businesses request to be designated as a BIA, which is then approved by the province.

BIAs are completely funded by their members through a special tax levy collected by the municipality. This levy is then distributed back to the BIA's board of management who all work on a volunteer basis to use the collective funds to make physical improvements to the neighbourhood and to plan promotional activities such as parades, street sales and festivals.

I believe, as do the majority of our members, that the current government's megacity proposal will be harmful to all our businesses and to the city of Toronto as a whole. We believe there will be no savings to the city either in the short term or the long term. We believe that maintaining accessibility to our elected officials is paramount to the success of the city, and that without this accessibility and its inherent accountability, the internationally recognized success enjoyed by Toronto cannot help but deteriorate.

Whenever I have to call Ontario Hydro, Consumers' Gas or any other large bureaucracy to ask for help, it is almost impossible for me to get in touch with someone willing to discuss my problem, let alone solve it. For them, whatever I say or do will have no effect on their future employment so they just don't care. However, when I call on one of our elected officials with the same problem, I often find that I get satisfactory results because they must compete for their jobs every few years. We prefer to live and do business in a city with more elected officials and fewer bureaucrats.

Further, we believe that the disruption created by such a changeover will be catastrophic at a time when many businesses are just beginning to recover from the recession. We believe that city services will erode to the lowest local level, while staff wages and user fees will escalate to the highest local level. We feel that the megacity proposal, although originally intended to improve the operation of the city, was too hastily conceived, and as these hearings clearly indicate, without enough input from outside sources.

We implore you to listen to the concerns of all the people of the province and not just a select few. If the same percentage of my members were questioning one of my board's planned activities as concerned citizens are

questioning this proposal, I would be concerned whether I was making the right decision. At the very least I would postpone my decision and re-evaluate the proposal. There is no crisis here in Toronto. There is no need to rush this decision. I don't know who it was who once said, "A person who walks slowly in the right direction will reach their destination faster than someone who runs quickly in the wrong direction," but I feel this government is doing just that: running quickly in the wrong direction.

If you care about the city of Toronto and all its citizens, your actions don't show it. I care about this city. That is why I'm here today. I was born in Toronto 42 years ago. I have lived all my life in the GTA, including 10 years in North York and a year in East York. I gladly volunteer my time to do what I can to improve my little area of the city. Many of the other individuals and groups speaking out against this proposal are doing so not because they dislike this government, but because they care about the future of this city.

Please listen to us. Despite what its critics may say, Toronto works as a city. This proposal, if passed, will not improve the city. Please let's all work together to do what is right for our children and our children's children.

1140

**Ms Churley:** Thank you very much. It is just a coincidence, isn't it, that I get to question you and you represent a BIA in my riding which you may have all heard had a big fire yesterday. I trust that things are picking up again today?

**Mr McLean:** Hopefully, yes.

**Ms Churley:** Good. In your presentation I found the last point very interesting, that there are a lot of perhaps even Tories — I know some Tories in our riding, in your area in fact, small business people, who generally support what this government is doing but are very alarmed about this proposal to create a megacity. I think your message to the government, "Please listen to us," is very important because I believe they've been taking the position that it's just a bunch of yahoos, almost, who have objections to this, but sensible business people of course will prefer the megacity. So I think that's a very good point.

Having been a city councillor, I know that the example you gave, the local accessibility to your city councillor, in our case in Riverdale the Metro councillor as well, is a very important one. I know that I spent a lot of time when I was a local city councillor going to regular BIA meetings, helping sort out specific local problems, dealing with problems with the budget and on and on. It was a very close working relationship. I think that's a good example of how the local councillor can work well with the community. Can you elaborate on what you fear will happen in terms of the local business people working with the bureaucracy?

**Mr McLean:** As I mentioned in my little talk, when we have problems, as we currently are with Ontario Hydro digging up the roads, and Consumers Gas dug up the roads last summer, they don't always seem to work in the most efficient manner. They have trucks parked unnecessarily on the street, they block areas that don't necessarily need to be blocked and it creates a lot of problems for small businesses, for print shops, restaurants. A customer drives along the street and cannot park

nearby. They're forced to drive further along the street and nine times out of 10 they won't walk back to that restaurant or print shop; they'll go to the one that's closest to wherever they parked their car.

We've gone to these companies while construction is under way, or tried to go to them, to say, "Listen, can you please do this or do that," to which we get very little response. They just don't seem to care. They have an arrogant attitude: "What's your problem? We've got work to do." Yet once we go to either our Metro councillor or our city councillor, or our MPP, yourself, we seem to get action on it because someone seems to really care.

My summation from that is that if you have to be re-elected and you have to go to the people to say, "Will you support me?" you need to support the people in the in-between time. We often find we will get support from elected officials that we won't get from bureaucrats. A lot of small businesses are truly concerned that if we have to deal with bureaucrats in the future, because our elected officials represent such a large geographic area with so many people, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to get in touch with these people. Even if we get in touch with them, how much time will they have for us?

We would rather deal with an elected official who will act on our concerns rather than a bureaucrat who doesn't really care because nothing is on the line for that person. Whether they act on our request or not, they'll still have their job, they will still have their jobs four years from now.

**Ms Churley:** I want to ask you about taxes as well, because I know from my time in politics in the area that's a growing concern. The government is moving ahead with what it calls AVA, which is really MVA. Are you concerned as a small businessperson in the area not only about MVA coming in, but as well, do you believe the government when it says with the downloading and the amalgamation — put it this way: Have you seen any evidence yet that your taxes really are going to go down or do you think they're going to go up?

**Mr McLean:** We're very worried that taxes will go up. That's a big concern for a lot of the businesses, because if you drive along the Danforth, although it appears to be successful and the restaurants are busy on weekends and throughout the summertime, I know a lot of them are touch and go and are just getting by. Many businesses are in that same situation. The restaurants are the busiest but there are lots of other businesses along the Danforth, even lawyers, who are just getting by on a day-to-day basis.

One of their big concerns also is the offloading of expenses. They're worried that their property taxes are going to go up, and they have indicated to me that this is a concern for them because if you're in a business today where you're just getting by, and indications from the Toronto board of trade survey and other predictions from politicians and other people are that taxes may go up, how much longer can you stay in business if you're making \$30,000 a year now? You figure: "I may as well just throw in the towel and get a job. I can make just as much money from a job." That business closes and it's a concern for everybody. The whole area is worried about a deterioration if there are too many vacancies on the street.

**Ms Churley:** It's my understanding that the association of BIAs across — is it Metro? — is opposing this. What's it called again?

**Mr McLean:** It's TABIA for short. The Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas has already written a letter to the provincial government; Alex Ling, chairperson of Bloor West Village BIA, who has been chair of that BIA for 25 years and chair of the TABIA association, which is the umbrella group that represents all BIAs in the city. All the BIAs have the same concern. Other BIAs in the city are Bloor-Yorkville, Forest Hill Village. We had a meeting in the fall when this idea was first proposed, and it was suggested that Alex Ling, our chair, write a letter to the government expressing our concerns.

**Ms Churley:** Did any of you ever at any point try to meet with Mr Leach or any of the officials or government members to discuss this?

**Mr McLean:** I have not and I don't think Alex Ling or any of the members of TABIA has.

**Ms Churley:** Do you think you're being listened to, as small business people in the city of Toronto?

**Mr McLean:** We're hoping, through this committee hearing and then through writing to our MPPs, that we will be heard. That's our concern, because we feel this legislation does represent the concerns of some people in the city, that they wish this kind of a proposal to go through — we're not saying we're the only voice in the city — but I think the government should take the time to listen to all the people in the province, not just some people. It seems like a select few are being listened to. But we represent other voices in the city, and we feel that we should be listened to also and our concerns should be accommodated at least in any legislation that's passed.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr McLean, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### YORK CITIZENS FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY

**The Chair:** Would John MacLennan please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr MacLennan, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr John MacLennan:** It's still morning, I think, isn't it?

**The Chair:** Yes, you're right. I'm ahead of myself. Sometimes it just feels like afternoon, I guess.

**Mr MacLennan:** I'm sure it's been a long day, and maybe it'll get longer.

**The Chair:** Welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes today to make a presentation. Could the entire group introduce themselves at the beginning of the presentation.

**Mr MacLennan:** My name is John MacLennan. I'm the co-chair of York Citizens for Local Democracy. To my right is John Mihevc, who's going to speak, along with Gord Garland, who is the co-chair. Actually he's from York Fights Back, which came together during the Days of Action. Maybe you remember that; I don't know. I'm going to ask Gord to start, then go to John.

**Mr Gord Garland:** To begin with, I'm a businessman in the city of York. I've been a resident in the city of York for 20 years. I'm a member of York Fights Back,

which is a coalition of community, labour, education and social justice groups and individuals. I'm also co-chair of the York Citizens for Local Democracy-York Fights Back weekly meetings. I was the policy analyst with David Crombie's Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront for three years. I've been a regional economist and housing analyst with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.

What I'd like to do is to just briefly provide you with an overview of our presentation. I'll set the general context and then allow John to focus in on some of the city of York implications, and then our other speaker will focus in on Fairbank Park as an example of local democracy in action. Then what I'll do is conclude by drawing some links between this piece of legislation and Bill 104 and the downloading of provincial responsibilities on to the new megacity.

In terms of general context, the provincial Who Does What panel basically had two objectives: One was to look at the issue of governance; the other was to look at the issue of property tax changes. In what has come out thus far, the focus has been almost exclusively on the issue of governance. To begin with, Anne Golden and her task force looked at these issues, then Libby Burnham reviewed Anne Golden, then Crombie's Who Does What panel reviewed Libby Burnham and Anne Golden as well as 25 years of reports.

In the end, Crombie couldn't come up with a decision. He recommended two radically different approaches: One was a four-city model and the other was a megacity. In essence, the Conservative government in power today flipped a coin and decided, "Let's go with the megacity." It was not on the basis of any definitive review, it was not on the basis of any public consultation. In fact, if you look at Golden, Burnham and Crombie, they are appointees who did not have to consult with anyone. Note that with the proposed implementation of the new megacity, the other changes in the GTA outside of Metro Toronto are not even being considered for implementation. Perhaps that is a reflection of the politics of governance.

**1150**

The other side of the coin was massive property tax changes, and here we're not just referring to actual value assessment, we're referring to massive shifts from commercial and industrial property tax to residential property tax. I think it's instructive to take a look at the development of some of the decisions that were made by the Who Does What panel with respect to property tax.

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto recommended elimination of the 15% mill rate differential between commercial and industrial and residential properties and the establishment of a single mill rate. Currently the mill rate for residential must be 85% of commercial and industrial. If you look at the final recommendations of Crombie and the Who Does What panel, they mirror what was being said as a general recommendation by the board of trade.

If you look at what the board of trade recommended with respect to the business occupancy tax, it recommended abolition of the business occupancy tax. Currently this adds an additional 30% to 40% to commercial and

industrial property taxes and ranges from 25% to 75% of C&I taxes depending on the type of business. Financial institutions, the billion-dollar club, the banks and the insurance companies pay 75% in terms of business occupancy tax. The Who Does What panel recommended the elimination of the business occupancy tax through a process of intermunicipal competition. When it comes right down to it, in terms of property taxes and what has been the focus of the media, it's all been on governance, but these massive property tax changes are also coming.

Looking at the interrelationship of the issue of governance and the issue of property taxes, I believe it's important to quote from the board of trade's submission. Here they're quoting from a report done by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, a US bank, and while the reference is specific to education, I think it is equally applicable to service delivery by upper tiers of government where you have very large wards and essentially unresponsive politicians. I quote from the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago:

"Those reform efforts that constrain school funding from local sources while increasing funding from state sources have either lowered overall expenditure levels or slowed the growth in education expenditures because schools are forced to compete with other state-wide institutions for funding status."

Here we have a pretty clear statement of what upper levels of government, unresponsive levels of government, can do. They can constrain spending.

Having dealt with that general context, I'd like to just turn it over to John for some of the city of York implications of the megacity, this city that's supposed to have about 2.3 million population, larger than six provinces.

**Mr MacLennan:** I just want to share with you that we had a meeting last night and we are really concerned about some of the aspects. One of the problems we faced in York is, I think, some difficulties of how to move ahead. There's a debate taking place within York about merging with the city of Toronto. We haven't taken a position on that, although we agree with the idea that it should be decided by the city of York and the city of Toronto and the democratic processes that are in place to do that. We don't think we should be forced into a merger with the city where we'd have no identity and have less popular representation by elected representatives.

One of the things that maybe is a problem is the paternalistic approach. I think it was found, maybe on the weekend, in one of the articles in the newspaper by Mr Gilchrist, this approach that we'd be better off with our taxes and also our services, recreation and that. That's fine, that may be true, but we in the city of York, along with the city of Toronto, should be able to decide that, not the provincial government or their representatives in the city of Toronto, particularly someone from Scarborough. We take exception to that aspect of it.

I want to just pass it on to John, because we have an example of where local government works, and we just want to make a point and reiterate it here at this point in time. Thank you.

**Mr John Mihevc:** Good morning. I'd like to thank you for allowing the York Citizens for Local Democracy to speak to this committee on Bill 103. My name is John

Mihevc, and I have lived in the city of York for almost all of my life. I grew up in the neighbourhood in the area of Dufferin and Eglinton. One of my fondest childhood memories is of the many summers I spent going swimming at Fairbank Park swimming pool and participating in the Fairbank Park's summer recreation program. I did not have an opportunity to go to expensive summer camps, and Fairbank Park offered an important green space for me and the children of the area.

About eight years ago, plans were announced to turn the park over to developers and build condominiums. This was also presented to the residents of York as a done deal. However, an interesting thing happened along the way; it was called local democracy. Citizens' groups formed to stop the project from going through, a project that would destroy a vital and rare piece of green space in that area. After several years of struggle and by using the democratic process, these groups were successful in stopping the development and in throwing out of office the councillors who were attempting to ram through the legislation.

**Mr MacLennan:** Some of them were Tories.

**Mr Mihevc:** I think there are two important lessons to be learned from this; the first is that if the city of York had been part of a megacity, there would be no Fairbank Park today. This is because the concerns of the residents in the neighbourhood of Fairbank Park would have been completely swallowed up and ignored by a megacity council. It is because of York's size that we were able to raise awareness on the issue and to hold our democratically elected officials accountable.

Smaller cities work better because they are more responsive and accountable to the concerns of local residents. Smaller cities work better because they are more responsive to their citizens. Because of the size of York, every councillor visited the Fairbank Park site and was made aware of the issues. Could you imagine that happening on a mega-council of 44 members? Control for planning must be kept at a local level, where local concerns will be respected.

The second lesson pertains more to the present situation. The York Citizens for Local Democracy was formed over a month ago by concerned citizens in the city of York because of what we regard as a profoundly undemocratic piece of legislation. As is the case of Fairbank Park, a plan is being hatched which will affect the residents, and they are not being consulted. The York Citizens for Local Democracy is growing rapidly into a citizens' movement, much like the countless other groups that are springing up throughout the city. As in the experience of Fairbank Park, we know that we will continue to grow and to demand that our voices be heard well after the referendum.

We bring one basic demand to this government, and that is to respect democracy; that means to respect the voices of the citizens of York and of the other municipalities. The way these voices will be heard is through the referendum. We ask one simple thing, and that is to respect the outcome of the referendum. Respect the vote. If the citizens of York and the other municipalities vote for amalgamation, then so be it. But if they vote No, then this message has to be respected. That's called democracy, and you ignore it at your own peril. I can assure

you that the York Citizens for Local Democracy will continue to fight to ensure that democracy is respected.

**Mr Garland:** Just let me conclude with a few comments. To begin with, the city of York is an ethnically and racially diverse community. It has a large anglo population but an equally large Italian population, Portuguese, Hispanic and, in terms of racial diversity, black citizens as well as white citizens as well as all coloured citizens. We manage to work as a community because we treat each other as equals. That is the fundamental basis of democracy. Our wards are small wards, 10,000 electors versus the 50,000 electors the megacity wards would have. With these small wards, you can afford the time to communicate to the different ethnic and linguistic groups in their own language. You can build community consensus over time. This is what government is for: It is for the people.

We do not understand what the rush is with this megacity proposal. It appears to be an issue of administrative convenience trampling democracy. As the example of Fairbank Park demonstrated, in the rush to develop Fairbank Park, only through the actions of citizens was the mask torn off that and was it revealed that the developer was working in collusion with two of the local aldermen as well as a Metro alderman, and only through citizen action were those people put in jail and removed from office.

Democracy is a great leveller. All citizens are created equal. It is rule by the free vote of citizens. It is rule by law. When I look at Bill 103, I do not see rule by the free vote of citizens in determining their future, and I do not see rule by law. The Conservative government was elected by 28% of Ontario's eligible voters. You have no mandate from us to do any of this.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, gentlemen. We've exceeded the allotted time, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward and making your presentation today.

**Mr MacLennan:** Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

**The Chair:** We're recessed until 3:30 this afternoon.  
*The committee recessed from 1203 to 1532.*

#### URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

**The Chair:** Good afternoon. Would Stephen Kaiser of the Urban Development Institute please come forward. Good afternoon, gentlemen, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Stephen Kaiser:** Good afternoon. My name is Stephen Kaiser and I am president of the Urban Development Institute. With me is Mr Orvin Zendel, chair of our organization and a principal in a North York-based company, Interblocks Ltd/Royal Indevco Properties. Mr Zendel's firm develops land, provides project management and development consulting services to large and small real estate corporations, property owners and government clients both within and beyond Metropolitan Toronto. I would like to thank you for allowing us the opportunity of providing our thoughts on Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, from the perspective of the land development industry, both residential, industrial and commercial.

Let me say from the outset that we support the government's direction and believe this legislation will result in a new, simplified governance structure for Toronto which will be capable of meeting the many challenges ahead. Saving money, removing barriers to growth, and investment and creating jobs are cornerstones of this government's agenda, and we believe they are fully embraced in Bill 103.

Before I discuss the benefits of amalgamation, however, I would like to describe briefly the role of the Urban Development Institute and the nature of its representation for the benefit of this committee.

For 40 years, the Urban Development Institute, or UDI, has acted as the voice of the land development, building and property management industry in Ontario. The institute is a non-profit organization supported by its members, which include firms and individuals who own sizeable holdings of raw land, apartment units and commercial and industrial space.

Our membership is engaged in all aspects of the planning and development of communities and the construction of residential, industrial and commercial projects. UDI also serves as a forum for knowledge, experience and research on land use planning and development.

Today our members include land developers, land use and environmental planners, investors, financial institutions, engineers, lawyers, economists, surveyors, landscape architects, marketing and research firms and architects. Together they have successfully provided all forms of housing and job creating industry to the entire GTA region and take great pride in the communities they have built within Metro Toronto. Together they constitute the collective forces guiding the creation and improvement of Ontario's built environment.

Metropolitan Toronto was established in 1954 in response to a clear need for coordination of services and for a forum for its constituent municipalities to develop together. Initially, the challenge was to provide for major infrastructure or hard services such as roads, sewers and watermains, to support growth, and to plan development. However, as Metro matured, it assumed responsibility for transit, social services, police, licensing, waste disposal and ambulance care, to ensure that the costs and benefits of providing these services were shared by the entire community.

Today the responsibilities of the current Metro government are such that its budget is nearly three times larger than the combined budgets of the six area municipalities. In fact, as you know, over 70% of the property tax bill in Metro supports services that are already amalgamated. In this context, amalgamation or unification of Metro's seven government structures, as represented in Bill 103, is the final step in this evolutionary process. History is simply repeating itself.

I would now like to outline the reasons why we think amalgamation makes sense.

The new city of Toronto will provide an opportunity to reduce duplication and overlap, minimize administrative overhead and achieve greater economies of scale. Although the estimates associated with these savings can be debated at length, a clear opportunity to realize on them exists.

As an industry whose continued success depends on an efficient government framework, we strongly believe that improvements to the current structure and the delivery of planning services are necessary. In a study completed for the GTA task force by the Canadian Institute of Public Real Estate Companies, it was determined that there were 35 separate planning departments with 1,300 staff members and budgets in excess of \$100 million serving Metro Toronto and the four surrounding regions. Of that, seven planning departments, with a total staff of approximately 500 and a budget of almost \$50 million, serve Metro alone.

Amalgamation will result in a more cost-effective coordination and delivery of planning services to Canada's largest residential and business population. The new city of Toronto will provide a one-window, single-tier and consistent approach to the delivery of planning and land use approvals.

All seven municipalities currently develop and apply their own official plan, zoning bylaws, site plans, consent and minor variance policies, and all offer different and widely varying interpretations of Ontario's building and fire codes.

In addition, under today's system, a Metro approval is required for most land use applications that have already been approved at the local level. While this may sound simple, it isn't. The directly elected nature of Metro's council has acted in many cases as an impediment to locally driven initiatives due to parochial tendencies.

Redevelopment and intensification is an extremely difficult exercise in Metro because the approvals process is confused and distorted by two levels of directly elected politicians with often differing views on the same project. With a unified Toronto, the days of confusing and differing interpretations of planning policy and multi-layered approvals will largely be eliminated.

The new city of Toronto will enhance the ability of the Metro area to speak with a single voice to the international business community and, in doing so, will stand a better chance of attracting investment and strengthening the local and GTA economy. While municipal boundaries are for the most part artificial, they do create very real obstacles to a coordinated program of economic development. Local councils in Metro continue to compete with one another because there is no incentive to cooperate for the greater good. The Metro area has enormous international potential; governance reform creates the opportunity to sell the region more effectively and more efficiently.

#### 1540

The new city of Toronto will ensure that Metro is marketed with a single voice and thereby better positioned to compete with urban regions in other jurisdictions throughout North America and the world, another reason we believe that the new city of Toronto is the next natural step in the evolution of the Metro area and vital to achieving the vision of an integrated, well-balanced and coordinated GTA. It is an integral part of the success and proper functioning of the new Greater Toronto Services Board. In fact, the decision to create the new city of Toronto must go hand in hand with a decision to establish a GTA-wide coordinating body, or the ability of

Metro to effectively participate in decision-making at the GTA level will be minimized.

According to the board of trade, Metro still possesses over half the assessment base of the GTA and nearly two thirds of the commercial assessment and is clearly the fiscal anchor of the GTA. The new city of Toronto structure will preserve this economic vitality and livability which is so essential to the future success and health of the entire greater Toronto area.

The new city of Toronto will create an opportunity for improved accountability and reduced taxes by placing the responsibility for all municipal functions with a single city council. Market forces can be brought to bear on the delivery of local services through alternate methods, which have often been resisted by the area municipalities.

Amalgamation establishes a single environment where public and private providers can for the first time compete equally. In so doing, the efficiency of providing the services should increase and the costs decline. It is not important who provides the service, only that a competitive environment exists. Snowplowing, sidewalk maintenance, garbage collection, tax billing, all of which are currently provided and duplicated six times at the local level, can now be more effectively integrated and, if appropriate, contracted out at a unified Metro level.

As evidenced by our comments, UDI is fully supportive of the bill, its direction and the model for the new city's governance. We would, however, like to offer some cautionary comments.

We are concerned about the development and use of community councils and neighbourhood committees as contemplated under the new act. While the details have yet to be clarified, it is our understanding that community councils would consist of seven or eight wards, with each ward being represented by its elected councillor. These community councils would receive input from neighbourhood committees, which would be comprised of non-elected community representatives.

On policy decisions such as official plans and their amendments, the new city of Toronto municipal council would be the approval authority but would receive recommendations from community councils that are crafted largely by the neighbourhood committees. On site-specific development applications such as zoning bylaw amendments, minor variances, consents, site plans, it is intended that the community councils act as the approval authority but would again receive direct input and advice from these neighbourhood committees.

The strength and the ability of these neighbourhood committees to directly and powerfully influence community council decisions and recommendations is a disturbing prospect for the land development industry. No one participant in the approvals process, whether it be a resident, a special interest group or a proponent, should be elevated to the decision-making level and thereby unduly influence the actions of the others.

The creation of these non-elected and largely unaccountable neighbourhood committees should be clearly and tightly defined or the efficiencies of a single-tier, one-window approvals process inherent in the unified city will be lost. This concept could set a dangerous precedent and we believe it needs a great deal of additional discussion and review.

In addition, while this bill is clearly not about disentanglement or assessment reform, we are concerned about the extent of downloading that will be placed on the new city and its long-term impacts.

As a result of the recent shift of responsibilities proposed during mega-week, it is clear that property tax will play a larger role in the funding of urban services than it ever did before. If the vision and objectives of this new unified city are to be realized, it is vital that the burden of supporting these new-found responsibilities is fairly and equitably shared by all those who benefit.

To sum up our remarks, we believe unification will create an opportunity to reduce duplication and overlap, minimize administrative overhead and achieve greater economies of scale. Unification will create a one-window, single-tiered and consistent approach to the delivery of the planning and land use approvals process.

Unification will create an opportunity for improved accountability and reduced taxes by placing the responsibility for all municipal functions within a single city council.

Unification will enhance the ability of the Metro area to speak with a single voice to the international business and investment community. Unification is the next natural step in advancing the model and vision of an integrated, well-balanced and coordinated GTA. It will preserve the economic vitality and livability of the central core which is essential to the future success and health of the entire greater Toronto area.

The timing, circumstances and dynamics for the new city of Toronto are right. The economic, social, fiscal and functional reality is that Metro Toronto in many respects is already an amalgamated city and it's time that the governance structure catches up.

Our membership has been fully canvassed, and we support Bill 103 and commend your government for taking this bold and necessary step. We look forward to working closely with you and your transition team to ensure the creation of a powerful, focused and healthy urban region — the new city of Toronto.

Thank you. We'd be happy to try and answer any questions.

**The Chair:** Unfortunately that will have to happen at another place and time because you've used your allotted time fully. I want to thank you for coming forward on behalf of the committee.

#### GREATERTORONTO HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

**The Chair:** Would David Hirsh and Tom Stricker please come forward. Good afternoon, gentlemen. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Hirsh:** My name is David Hirsh. I am president of the Brandy Lane Corp. We are a residential home building company in the greater Toronto area. We build freehold and condominium homes primarily to the first-time buyer market in communities throughout the GTA.

I'm here today in my capacity as president of the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association. It's a volunteer position and I hold it with great pride. Joining

me today is our immediate past president of the GTHBA and chair of our megacity task force, Tom Stricker.

Before we get into the megacity, I want to tell you a bit about our association. The Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association is the voice of the residential construction industry in the greater Toronto area. We represent the residential home builder, whether they build single-family homes, town homes or condominiums. We also represent the infill and custom home builder as well as the professional renovation contractor.

Our membership includes the suppliers to the industry: the brick manufacturers, the window and door manufacturers. We also represent the subcontractors, be it brick-layers, carpenters, drywallers or trimmers, and we represent the many service and professional firms, as well as financial institutions associated with our industry. All told, we have more than 850 member companies maintaining businesses, residences and operations throughout the greater Toronto area.

In 1996 our members sold more than 20,000 new homes. This represents almost 60,000 person-years of employment. That's the equivalent of 60,000 full-time jobs for one year. Our industry has tremendous economic impact and as such we have a tremendous stake in the legislation at hand here today.

**1550**

Our members have been building Metro Toronto and the rest of the GTA, community by community, since the association was established more than 75 years ago in 1921.

To put today's legislation into perspective, I can tell you that our founding association was divided into five Toronto districts representing members as far north as Eglinton Avenue. My, my, times have changed.

Okay, let's talk Bill 103. We are here today to say that we support Bill 103. We support unification. We support the megacity.

Tom made a speech recently where he noted that our governments have more regulations on nail guns than they do on handguns. Looking at the government structure as it exists today, our industry is subject to seven official plans and seven different planning and approvals processes, not to mention countless zoning bylaws, all of them different. Think of the inefficiencies that creates as our members consider developing or building in one municipality versus another. It's our own version of "who does what." Who allows what, under what conditions? Who charges for something and who doesn't? Who changed the rules because a homeowner didn't like what the builder had accomplished within the existing rules?

The current framework has become a bonanza for the various consultants who make a living shepherding paper through the process. The process has become an end in itself rather than a means to an end. We believe the megacity will substantially reduce the duplication and red tape in the process, thereby unleashing the full potential of our industry to create jobs and wealth as we develop and redevelop the city.

We have one major caveat in our support of Bill 103 surrounding the proposed neighbourhood committees and community councils.

The backgrounder to the legislation suggests that the neighbourhood committees could provide advice and guidance to community councils on local planning matters. The community councils could also monitor service delivery in their neighbourhood; make recommendations on community needs, issues and priorities and local matters which have been delegated by council, including distributing funding for recreational, cultural or social needs.

We have no problem with these items. Citizen input is vital to the process and we welcome it. However, giving the proposed neighbourhood committees any planning-related powers is redundant and totally inconsistent with the goals of unification.

Under the new Planning Act there is ample opportunity for citizens to provide advice and guidance on local planning matters. Input on the character of neighbourhoods should be given when broad-based consultations are held at the public meeting stage of the official plan development process, not on an application-by-application basis.

Let's not perpetuate the problems inherent in the current system by adding what has the potential to become another layer of government. The goal should be consistency in building and planning standards and processes. At the very least, we would expect uniformity in the building permit approval process and levels of inspection and enforcement.

It's no doubt an understatement to say that you've heard a lot of negative criticism about the megacity. I'm sure we're not the only people to have noticed that most of the people who are complaining about the megacity are confused with who does what. Bill 103 is not about assessment reform. Bill 103 is not about who pays for welfare. Bill 103 is about the structure of government within the boundaries of Metro as it exists today. Whether the government proceeds with Bill 103 or not, assessment reform is coming and it's long overdue, as is disentanglement. But the point I want to make is that the megacity will not cost taxpayers money, it will only save money.

In concluding, we want to emphasize that when it comes to competing in the global economy, it's very important that the city speak as one voice. The megacity legislation will replace the current fragmented system with a clearly focused economic and political structure, well positioned to move forward into the next century.

Thank you for your time. Tom and I will be delighted to answer any questions you may have.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Mr Hirsh, Mr Stricker. I appreciate your coming before us here to make a presentation. Let me just say at the outset that I think the successes you've had, particularly in this last year, in terms of the dramatic increase in new house sales coupled with the increase in used or existing homes in Metro are exactly the sort of economic indicators that allow us to approach the disentanglement exercise with a lot more optimism than some of our critics.

You mentioned in your presentation the ability to reduce the costs of dealing with government. You may be aware there are 184,000 different bylaws, and of course the interpretations that the various planning departments put on the works you do varies from city to city. Have

you ever quantified what it costs in terms of delays and what you have to go through in dealing with municipal governments in terms of what that adds to the cost of a home?

**Mr Hirsh:** I can't say that the association has quantified the number. I can tell you, as a home builder, it adds significant costs to my process in carrying land and in bringing projects to market. It's very onerous on us as builders.

**Mr Gilchrist:** You didn't mention anywhere in your discussion any concerns with the timing of what we're doing. Is it your perception that the issue of municipal reform is in fact a new concept, or would you have a different perspective? I don't want to put words in your mouth, but our critics are saying that this is rushed. Despite the fact that Metro was created 44 years ago and it's had a number of intermediary steps of amalgamation since then, is this something new? Should we be delaying?

**Mr Hirsh:** No. It's time to amalgamate. It's time to bring a unified voice for Toronto, no question.

**Mr Gilchrist:** As you're probably aware, the same day that we introduced this bill we made it very clear that we will be bringing forward a bill that produces a Greater Toronto Services Board. In fact a very respected former civil servant, Mr Milt Farrell, is meeting with all of the GTA councils as we speak, and his work has to be done by March 31. To what extent do you see that body further integrating the planning issues in particular, because that's what affects your industry the most? What powers should it have to ensure that there aren't barriers at Steeles and at the Rouge park to development for your industry?

**Mr Tom Stricker:** Presently even in Metro we have some of those barriers when it comes to road widenings: The city of Toronto may not want one, Metro does want one, some of the citizens do, some don't. Those barriers exist within Metro right now.

In respect to the greater services board, transportation is a key, sewage, water, all those services have to be integrated, as well as recreation in my opinion. There are arenas outside of the area that are overused, arenas within Metro that are underused, and it goes right through the school system as well.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I think Mr Parker had a question.

**Mr Parker:** Just briefly. Thank you, Mr Hirsh. A lot of people have appeared in front of us and they've said: "What's the need for change? We were good enough for Fortune magazine as we are. Everything's just fine. Why don't you just leave things alone? What's the big rush to make all these changes?" To your mind, what would be the cost? What would be the consequence if we left things as they are?

**Mr Hirsh:** The consequence is that the costs, as we have to bear them as builders of this city, will continue to mount as more and more regulations and more and more zoning bylaws by seven different municipalities come into effect.

**Mr Parker:** You see potential for improvement if we amalgamate. In the case of your industry and in the case of the people who live here, how will they feel that benefit?

**Mr Stricker:** We see certain areas that are underutilized: York has a lot of areas, the Black Creek area, in the planning and development natures; in Scarborough you have the GM plant site; many areas along Eglinton Avenue that are underutilized. The unicity will help bring those areas, we believe, into a better workable performance. Those are the advantages. I think you'll see some neighbourhoods improved and you'll see other ones improve that are already fine. So overall, I believe the politics will settle it all out. The citizens will have a say on how their neighbourhoods are developed and the improvements will be there.

**Mr Parker:** Within Metro recently, one of the problems has been the loss of industry to the 905 area. Do you see amalgamation of the Metro municipalities as a means of helping to address that?

**Mr Hirsh:** I think we see clearly that a one-voice Toronto will serve to attract industry into the city. So I think definitely amalgamation will help that.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale):** Gentlemen, what advice do you have for this committee in terms of the implementation of the new unified city? Many critics have pointed out that there are just going to be costs; there are no positive savings benefits. Could you provide us with some specific insight as to how you would see a new unified city coming about so that we do not end up necessarily replicating the behaviour of the old Metro government?

**Mr Stricker:** A trick question. I guess when we view it, we're viewing it from the building permit and planning application. I'm not sitting here as a citizen. It will be streamlined. It will be simplified. There should be more bang for the buck as the consistency is applied. Right now you have — I don't like to say this — different fiefdoms, if you want to call them that, or different areas that have pet procedures on how you do things. They're costly and they're not necessary, but they do them because they do them. I think over time that will be straightened out. That won't happen immediately. That will happen over probably a five-year period and a lot of this will be reorganized and restructured. The citizens just have to see that it's done sensibly.

1600

**Mr Hastings:** Are you confident, as you are in your statement, that there are savings in a new unified city? Many of the critics have used Mr Wendell Cox as the ultimate guru in city reorganization, particularly from the American perspective, and he has produced a report for the city of Toronto whose findings I somewhat question in terms of there hardly being any savings. He says if you are going to make attempts at savings, it has to be done on a contracted-out basis for many services. Your comments?

**Mr Hirsh:** Clearly, we're looking at this legislation from an industry point of view. As an industry, as builders and developers in the GTA, we will definitely experience cost savings. If you simply do some arithmetic on the number of positions, the number of councils, the number of layers in the existing system, there will be cost savings, absolutely.

**The Chair:** Thank you, gentlemen, for coming forward this morning to make your presentation.

## SUSAN DRINKWALTER

**The Chair:** Would Susan Drinkwalter please come forward. Good afternoon, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Susan Drinkwalter:** Ladies and gentlemen, I would first like to take this opportunity to thank the committee for having me here today. My name is Susan Drinkwalter. I don't represent an association and I don't represent any special interest group. I'm just an ordinary citizen. I live in the city of York, I own a business in the city of Etobicoke, and I call Toronto my home.

I'm in favour of Bill 103, and I'm one of the silent majority that's probably being heard through this process. I grew up in the Annex in my early years, and when a teenager, my family moved to the High Park area. Then I began raising my own family in Swansea and Bloor West Village. These are the communities I grew up in within our GTA city. These are the neighbourhoods that I and all of us call our homes, and that's what we identify with.

Back in 1966 the provincial government of the day reduced the number of municipalities from 13 down to six. Neighbourhoods that we referred to back then, and also today, as Forest Hill, Long Branch, New Toronto, Swansea, Mimico, Weston and Leaside no longer had their own government, but did they really disappear? No, they didn't. Do people who live in those communities today still refer to them as Forest Hill and Leaside and Mimico and New Toronto? Yes, they do, because that's what they identify with.

Did life change when we went from 13 down to six municipalities? No. Why? Because we live in communities, we live in neighbourhoods, and it's the people who make it what it is. It's not the political structure. It's not the organizational structure.

Since our neighbourhoods will not change with this one Toronto or the megacity, what will change? In my mind, one major thing: It will cost less to run the city, and we will be able to provide services and equal benefits to all its citizens. The advantages as I see them are this:

(1) It's my understanding that the elected politicians will drop from 106 down to 44. I see this as a very good thing. I think we have far too many politicians to begin with, and I don't think there are many people who would think otherwise. Not only will we save in terms of their salaries, but we will also save in terms of their staff, in terms of their office space, their equipment and other overhead costs. Name a business today, mine included, that isn't trying to achieve that goal. Our elected representatives should be no different from us as business people and as citizens of this province. It will also mean that our citizens can make one telephone call and will not have to figure out who they have to call.

(2) One level of government will mean less duplication and overlap. Do we need six fire departments? No. Do we need six library systems? No. Do we need six garbage departments? No. Do we need six school boards? No. We do not need all this duplication.

(3) With a unified city, I believe we will have much more accountability. There will be no more passing the buck between the municipal systems.

(4) A unified city will provide cost savings. In the information I've read in the newspapers, it's my under-

standing that we're going to save in excess of \$100 million in 1998 alone and much more beyond that. I think this is a very good thing and a very necessary thing.

(5) A unified city will end all the self-interests of the current system. They can then work together and provide a unified front. This would let us be in a much better position to bid for things like the Olympics or world fairs and other international events.

(6) As a business owner, I welcome these changes. Do we really need the nearly 200,000 bylaws currently in place? I don't believe we do.

(7) Also as a business owner, I want to know that I'm being treated the same way as other business owners in Toronto, in East York, in Scarborough and North York. Why should my taxes and my services be different and maybe put me at a disadvantage in a competitive situation?

As a mother of three children, I want them to grow up in a safe community, a community that is strong and is vibrant. I want to see Bill 103 pass because I would like to see a good plan for a unified city that will provide more community input and deal with the needs of and provide services for our communities and for our neighbourhoods.

In conclusion, this great city of Toronto, which I have called home my whole life, is one of the best cities in the world. I would like us to finish the job that was started in 1966 and move Toronto to even more greatness as we move into the next century. Thank you.

**Mr Colle:** I guess you would agree with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who says one of the reasons he supports the megacity is because we'd have a better chance at getting international events like the Olympics. I don't know if you're aware of the fact that Sydney, Australia, that just acquired the Olympics for the year 2000, is made up of 40 municipalities, none over 300,000 in size. They still got the Olympics. Also, Atlanta is not a unified city; they got the Olympics. Do you think that should be reason enough to push for a city when you don't need a megacity to get the Olympics, if that's what you want?

**Ms Drinkwalter:** I'm not so sure that those are the sole reasons Atlanta or other cities got the Olympics. I'm saying that if we don't work together as people in a more united front, which we are not doing now, that provides less opportunity for us to get those particular types of events in our city.

Talk to any citizen of this city and they don't know if they're supposed to call their city person or their Metro person. Street lights are changed by one department, street cleaning is done by another department, depending on what street you happen to live on. I think there is far too much duplication of services and that's where the emphasis should be. Yes, it would be great to have Olympics, but on the other hand, I'm more concerned about the day-to-day happenings for myself and for my family.

**Mr Colle:** I think you misunderstood the question. I said Atlanta —

**Ms Drinkwalter:** I didn't misunderstand the question.

**Mr Colle:** Atlanta is not a unified megacity and it got the Olympics. Sydney is a divided city.

**Ms Drinkwarter:** That's not the only thing that makes a decision in terms of getting the Olympics. They don't look at whether you're a unified city to make that decision. They look at all aspects. If you have one city that is going to work together in concert and not have this in-fighting between the different levels of government, you're in a better position to get those types of things.

I also know that when we're going after things like trade associations to come to this city, we need to be able to provide the best city possible. I believe we have far too much waste, far too much duplication, and we could be better spending the money elsewhere to attract more businesses, to attract more jobs and to attract more people to spend money in this city.

1610

**Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East):** Thank you for your presentation. You call yourself an ordinary citizen and say you're looking for more accountability and more community input, yet the two previous speakers are against this community involvement. I'll read from their presentation: "However, giving the neighbourhood communities any planning-related powers is redundant and totally inconsistent with the goals of unification." So you're left out of it, right?

**Ms Drinkwarter:** First of all, they represent special interest groups. They obviously have a particular bent they're trying to present to this organization. I'm saying that as a mother, as a business owner, I would like to feel more connected to my community.

**Mr Grandmaître:** But don't you think the private sector represents special interests as well?

**Ms Drinkwarter:** I wouldn't totally disagree with that, but I also feel we need to take more control over our communities.

**Mr Grandmaître:** How would you like to participate in the process as an ordinary citizen?

**Ms Drinkwarter:** My understanding is that there will be more community committees put together.

**Mr Grandmaître:** But they're saying they're redundant.

**Ms Drinkwarter:** That's their opinion, and they're entitled to their opinion.

**Mr Grandmaître:** So you don't agree with it.

**Ms Drinkwarter:** I'm saying I would like to see more people involved in their communities and that's how I would like to participate. Rather than getting one opportunity once every four years to cast my vote for 103 politicians, I'd rather have fewer politicians and allow the people of the community, who have their own special requirements and needs, to represent themselves more fully than they do now.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Drinkwarter, for coming forward today and making your presentation.

ELIZABETH MacCALLUM

**The Chair:** Would Elizabeth MacCallum please come forward. Good afternoon, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Elizabeth MacCallum:** Thank you for letting me speak today about Bill 103 and thank you also for extending the hearings to allow more people to participate in this important aspect of the democratic process. It is

crucial not only that concerned citizens be allowed to speak, but that what we say be listened to and not be folded away unread in a binder.

My name is Elizabeth MacCallum. I grew up in Toronto and have spent most of my life here. However, what makes me appreciate Toronto the most is having lived in other cities around the world.

The city of Toronto and Metro Toronto are by no means perfect, but there is so much that is good here that any changes should be made after careful, well-measured studies and observations, not by a cobbled-together bill substantiated by a hasty, unconvincing study which doesn't even prove that there will be real savings. Already power is taken away from our elected officials before the bill is even passed, with the provincially appointed trustees who now control spending.

Perhaps the Minister of Municipal Affairs assumed that citizens of Toronto don't care about municipal and civic government because of low voter turnout during elections. This is indeed a problem that causes concern. Nevertheless, when troubles come to city residents they are quick to contact their ward councillors to complain and to ask for help. It is the most direct aspect of democracy we have.

Parking problems, traffic jams, traffic dangers to children, new inappropriate enterprises damaging neighbourhood functioning, the need for more green space, even the need for more trees on a street — all these issues are brought to our local councillors, who ignore citizen requests at their peril. With the enlarged organization proposed by Bill 103 and with responsibility of officials to the provincial government rather than to residents, there will be no one who needs to heed local requests.

In the last year and a half since the devastating cuts to welfare payments, I have worked closely with refugees who are forced to try and live on welfare payments alone. Only a government detached, unresponsive and indeed ignorant of the reality of poverty could have imposed such destructive hardship. This is the same government which is trying to assure us that Bill 103's massive amalgamation will make a more efficient civic structure. It is hard to believe.

What the downloading of social services will do to the cities of Toronto and Etobicoke and Scarborough and other areas with large numbers of immigrants and poor is easy to divine. It will cause Toronto to bleed to death. Already, cutbacks in education, which certainly include the devastation of adult education, make it much harder for immigrants to regroup their strengths and skills to fulfil their potential and their goal of being contributing citizens.

More social service costs resulting from Bill 103 will force such high taxes that the already precarious businesses, particularly the small ones serving local needs, will be forced to move away entirely or will simply close down, thus adding even more to the welfare rolls.

Over the last few years, I have been meeting with groups of people, joined under the name Together, instigated by concern about the September 1995 welfare cuts. In our far-ranging discussions with a wide group of participants from different parts of Toronto and different walks of life, we talked about what we could do to help, even if we could not convince the government to imple-

ment a creative, constructive welfare service. It became increasingly clear how much people value neighbourhood life and how much people are willing to work to restore neighbourhoods as they were before, when we had more local businesses, shops and services. People want to know their neighbours and be able to help each other. Bill 103's proposals are completely contrary to these fundamental beliefs in a city composed of vibrant, unique neighbourhoods.

Bigger does not mean better, as I am sure countless speakers have already said to this committee. Bigger does not mean cheaper. Toronto does work and should not be destroyed.

One of the most worrying aspects of Bill 103 is the cavalier way in which the provincial government is virtually dismissing governments we have chosen by election. Democracy is as fragile as a healthy city and is tampered with only at great risk. If the provincial government can whisk away all those duly elected officials in city governments, what other aspects of due process of democracy can you whisk away? What precedents are you setting for any governments following in your footsteps, which may engage in equally rash actions against you?

When I lived for several years in London, before Mrs Thatcher took total control of the city and instigated the demise of local government, it was a great place to live because despite its size it functioned as a collection of villages, each with its own heart. Toronto neighbourhoods and wards are as close as we come to those villages and they safeguard the different ways of life found throughout Metro.

When I lived in Peking in the 1970s, one of the few expressions of local autonomy was the creation of little huts built on the boulevards as safe houses after the disastrous earthquakes of 1976. Rather than being stuck in apartments under the close surveillance of state-implemented neighbourhood committees which were not responsible to the local citizens, many people moved into these little mud cabins, decorated with geraniums and crocheted curtains, and stayed there for years. When they were forced to destroy them as part of a cleanup campaign before the Americans arrived after normalization, the anger was palpable. In fact, as I was photographing the process, a man, frustrated beyond endurance, threw a concrete block all the way across the street at me.

People care about their neighbourhoods everywhere in the world. In Canada, we are supposed to have due democratic process to protect our neighbourhoods, our cities and our rights. We are not supposed to be driven to throwing bricks. But if any of you have been to the innumerable "No Megacity" meetings held daily throughout the area affected by Bill 103, you will have realized that people are angry and determined and demand the respect due to citizens in a democracy.

Do not be overwhelmed by the need to save face and force through Bill 103. Take the high road. Reconsider what you are doing. You can only gain admiration and respect and save a healthy city which contributes to the wellbeing of all Ontario.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** Ms MacCallum, I have to tell you that I've been very heartened by the

many individual presentations we've had wishing to maintain local autonomy and the fear they have of losing it. You're one of many.

On page 3 you said, "Bigger does not mean better." I want to quote Mr Harris, who is present here today, and I'm happy he's here listening to the various testimonies of the different people. He said in Fergus, Ontario, in 1994: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride?" That's what he said then. "I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities." In 1994, he agreed with you. Things have changed a lot since then.

**Ms MacCallum:** And in a recent vote in Fergus and Elora they voted against amalgamation.

#### 1620

**Mr Marchese:** You've heard a number of other people commenting on this whole issue of savings and you hear MPPs talk about that. One of them just talked disdainfully of this Wendell Cox presentation and his research. As far as I know, he's not a Liberal-minded person or a socialist, that I'm aware of. I think he's Conservative-leaning. He is not the only person who's researched this matter. He says, "Smaller governments are more accountable, smaller governments are more responsive, smaller local governments are more attuned to communities and neighbourhoods, and larger governments are more susceptible to special interests," and by that he means people with wealth who are able to influence those politicians.

He and other professors who have researched this in Canada and the US and the world have noted that when you amalgamate, the costs are bigger. Who are you tempted to believe, those who have gut feelings that somehow there are going to be savings, like the home builders and the Urban Development Institute, or do you believe people who have researched this matter and have come to the conclusion that there are no savings?

**Ms MacCallum:** Clearly, people who have researched the matter have a better understanding. I know that the Halifax-Dartmouth amalgamation has not saved money. Furthermore, there's more than savings involved in the changes.

**Mr Marchese:** I'm concerned about many things, but I suspect this government will want to save face and in the end they will make some changes to this bill. They will probably diminish the powers of the trustees because many people have been horrified by the powers they have. Would that satisfy you, if they simply make changes to that bill, or does the whole bill bother you?

**Ms MacCallum:** That wouldn't be sufficient to make the bill worth saving. There are too many aspects of it that are not respectful of democracy and are too autocratic. If you've ever lived in a country that is not democratic, you see what can happen very quickly.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms MacCallum, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

**The Chair:** Would Judy Darcy please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee. Before

you begin, could everyone at the table please introduce themselves?

**Ms Judy Darcy:** I'm Judy Darcy, national president, Canadian Union of Public Employees.

**Mr Brian Cochrane:** Brian Cochrane, president of Local 94, North York Civic Employees Union.

**Mr Rob Rolfe:** I'm Rob Rolfe. I'm the acting vice-president of Local 771, North York Public Library Employees Union.

**Ms Darcy:** We, the Central Advisory Committee of CUPE locals, are very pleased to be here today on behalf of municipal workers in Metro Toronto, and we welcome this opportunity to be able to present our views. We represent the front-line workers who deliver valuable services to the communities that make up Metro Toronto. What we have to say about Bill 103 could easily take hours; we have 15 minutes, so I'll give you the Coles Notes version.

We believe Bill 103 is a prescription to privatize public services; we believe that Bill 103 is a prescription to wipe out thousands of valuable public service jobs; and we believe that Bill 103 is also a prescription for taking power away from the people and the politicians who have been democratically elected by them at the local level and placing power in the hands of unelected provincial government appointees.

We represent, as I said, front-line workers, 30,000 of them, who work directly for municipalities in Metro Toronto, 65% of the entire municipal workforce. Fifty-five per cent of those members are employed directly by city or borough governments as well as regional government, and the remainder work for other local boards that will also be affected by this bill, like library workers, boards of health and so on.

Our members are child care workers, we are ambulance attendants, we repair roads, we inspect buildings, we repair hydro lines, we collect garbage, we care for senior citizens in Metro's homes for the aged, we care for the homeless in shelters, we provide services to business, we provide services to homeowners, we provide services to the poor, we are library workers, we are water and sewage treatment plant workers, public health workers, and we work in dozens of other occupations.

I'm pleased that Premier Mike Harris is here today. I can't believe I actually said that, Premier, but maybe we'll turn you right around today. I hope that's the case. But I am pleased that the Premier is here today because we are also the people who Premier Harris said will be the ones expected to make sacrifices in the new Metro Toronto.

We are proud of the services our members provide to the people of these communities. We work hard. We pay taxes like everybody else. We raise our children in these communities. We rely on public services. We also know that our communities value the services we provide.

The first issue I want to talk about is privatization, because this government has made no secret of its desire to both downsize government and reduce spending on public services. It claims that the megacity will improve public services while saving money for taxpayers when nothing could be further from the truth. The forced amalgamation of Metro municipalities, coupled with

massive downloading of costs for welfare, long-term care, social housing, ambulance, water, child care and so on, together with a lot of other areas, on to the municipal budget will force taxpayers to pay more while we believe it will also open up public services to takeovers from corporate contractors.

How will Metro taxpayers and residents of Metro pay for the added cost of downloading services? The estimates run from \$379 million to over \$500 million, and that's without getting into the \$600-million estimated lost revenue from business occupancy taxes. Will they pay through higher taxes? Will they pay through user fees? Will they pay through lower quality and less accessible services? We have no doubt that it will be through all of the above.

The amalgamation of Metro municipalities will not produce the savings to offset this downloading. Indeed, the cost to taxpayers will be a whole lot higher. Many other people before us have spoken about those costs. The transition costs are estimated at \$220 million. In the case of Halifax, amalgamation costs were double what was expected and property taxes have gone up for most residents. The same scenario in Metro Toronto would produce transition costs approaching half a billion dollars as well as hefty property tax increases, not to mention user fees.

Yet the provincial government insists over and over again that savings will be achieved. Why the apparent contradiction? We would put to you that it is because the government is not telling the truth about where the real savings are going to come from.

I want to refer to the KPMG study, commissioned by the government and paid for by the government, which appears to be the basis of its estimates. This KPMG study claims that consolidation of services and political offices will account for approximately one third of the savings and two thirds of the savings will come from what are referred to as so-called efficiency enhancements.

Concretely, a major strategy that KPMG proposes in the study for achieving these efficiencies is contracting out public services to the private sector or forcing municipal employees to engage in a process referred to as competitive bidding in an attempt to save their jobs. When we couple this with the knowledge that the government is considering, has considered, removing successor rights and also legislating overrides for collective agreement provisions that deal with protections for employees in the event of privatization, we are deeply concerned about what the future will hold. And it's not just public employees who should be concerned.

Did this government ask the people of Metro Toronto whether they want public services privatized? Did this government ask the people of Metro if they want homes for the aged turned into profit-making corporations at the expense of dignity and self-respect for our seniors? Did the government ask the people of Metro Toronto if they want to see their water treatment or sewage treatment plants sold off to the private sector? Do the people of Metro Toronto even know that the KPMG report recommends reducing the number of ambulance stations from 36 to three? We don't think so. Do the people of Metro Toronto want to see these human services sold off to

people like the giant Laidlaw corporation, which is already in the wings anxiously awaiting the opportunity to be able to make further profits by adding Metro's emergency vehicle fleet to its ever-growing ambulance fleet? Laidlaw are the people who are best known for hauling garbage.

**1630**

This is exactly what is at stake with the megacity, and this government does not want to listen to the will of the people on these issues. The people of Metro Toronto, through their elected local politicians, have made choices, including choices to maintain public control over most of their public services, but we believe the takeover of those services by the private sector is the goal of this government and is part of the hidden agenda of this bill.

Many people have already spoken about the issue of the powers that are proposed for the board of trustees and the transition team, which we believe are extremely dangerous to all residents of Metro who value their public services.

Bill 103 will not save municipalities millions of dollars, but it may well make millionaires of some of the friends of this government. We know that in the long run privatization of public service delivery often means more costly services as private contractors attempt to increase profits. We know it means lower-quality services when contractors cut corners to improve their bottom line. We know it means reduced accessibility to services and less accountability to the public. We know it means more user fees, less public input and it means that our local government becomes more dependent on the private sector and also less resourceful and less flexible as far as how they provide services.

The public sector can deliver cost-efficient, quality services and avoid the problems associated with privatization. We would just put out a couple of examples to you. In East York recently, there was a pilot project to contract out garbage collection to the private sector. At the conclusion of that pilot project, a decision has been made to bring that work back in-house because it can be done every bit as efficiently. If we look also at North York, there we have twice-weekly garbage collection which costs each resident a mere \$5 more a year compared to once-a-week collection in other Metro municipalities.

CUPE members, municipal employees, despite what the Premier may want to say about them, have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to work with municipal employers in order to bring about greater efficiency and greater productivity. In several CUPE municipal collective agreements negotiated in Metro Toronto this past year, there have been joint committees established between CUPE members and employers precisely to work together to seek out efficiencies and productivity. We have shown our commitment. We fear this government's commitment is not to the improvement of services but to eliminating them or privatizing them.

For those who are unaware of what is at stake if this bill and the rest of the Tory agenda that goes along with it goes ahead and for those who cannot imagine communities without good, affordable and accessible public services, we say, "Think Detroit, think inner-city New York, think Chicago, think Los Angeles; that's where our cities are headed."

The Premier says there will be less government as a result of Bill 103. He also said on January 21, and he said it unfortunately with a certain boasting tone in his voice, that yes, some CUPE members will lose their jobs. The KPMG report states that 4,500 jobs will be eliminated. If you will excuse the pun, we believe this estimate is a very conservative one and that the government has wildly underestimated the figures. But we ask: What will happen to those unemployed when they lose their jobs? What impact will that job loss have on the local economy?

We also say that we make absolutely no apology for fighting to protect our members' jobs. We make no apology for wanting good, decent-paying jobs for public sector workers, and we say also that those jobs benefit our community and our local economy as well as the people who hold those jobs. If anyone should apologize, we believe it's this government that should apologize for the outrageous statements it has made about public sector workers and also apologize to the citizens of Metro Toronto, who will be robbed of valuable services if this goes through.

KPMG stated in its report that the 10% reduction in the workforce will be accomplished through attrition. That is simply not possible without taking a major toll on services. In the last three years, Local 79 of CUPE, representing workers at the city of Toronto and the municipality of Metro Toronto, has already seen a decrease of 1,000 positions, largely through attrition, buyouts, and early retirement packages. North York has recently seen a reduction of 300 positions. City governments throughout Metro have been streamlining their services for the last several years and there is very little room left for voluntary exits. Further cuts in the workforce will certainly result not just in layoffs but also in a major reduction of services.

A recent poll on the megacity showed that the majority of citizens — not CUPE members — in Metro Toronto do not want public sector workers to suffer as a result of amalgamation. They do not want the government to eliminate thousands of municipal employees' jobs or cut their wages and benefits. They do not want to see \$14-an-hour jobs replaced with minimum-wage jobs and see public employees forced into a bidding war with each other, saying, "I'll work for \$12 an hour." "I'll work for \$10." "I'll work for \$8" — "Sold to the lowest bidder." This government may be looking for blood from public employees, but the public is not.

This government is threatening public sector workers in ways that are not supported by the public. This government is paving the way for privatization of services that the people want kept in public hands.

**The Chair:** Ms Darcy, just to remind you, you're into your final minutes.

**Ms Darcy:** I'm wrapping up. Let me just conclude with two things; one is a quote that may seem familiar on the government side of the House, and that quote is, "Ontarians must once again feel like citizens with a stake in the public life of their province, rather than as spectators who pay the bills but have little say in deciding what government does."

If those words do not come as a surprise on the Conservative side of the room, it's because they come from

a document called Your Ontario, Your Choice, a government document of last fall that also quotes the Premier widely. We say it is time that Premier Harris started to walk his talk.

We are very pleased to have been able to have this opportunity to speak to you today on behalf of CUPE members, on behalf of public employees, who will not sit by and see public services in this community reduced, see jobs eliminated or see democratic rights trampled.

This government's agenda is simply not going to sail through without the continued opposition not just of public employees but, as you have heard on many occasions before you, hundreds and thousands of citizens throughout this community.

On behalf of the 30,000 working women and men who will be directly affected by this proposed legislation, and also on behalf of our 180,000 members in the province of Ontario and 460,000 members from across the country who are also watching these events very closely, we thank you for the opportunity to address you today, and we say that we're very proud to join with the citizens of Metro Toronto in standing up for public services, in standing up for decent jobs, in standing up for democracy and in standing up for the future of our community.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making a presentation today. We've come to the end of the time, I'm sorry.

**Ms Darcy:** The Premier doesn't have any questions?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** I've got lots of questions.

**The Chair:** He may, but he may have to ask them at another time.

**Ms Darcy:** Fifteen minutes isn't a lot of time for 30,000 people.

**Mr Colle:** I move we allow 10 minutes for the Premier to talk.

**The Chair:** I heard a no. I'm sorry. Thank you very much for coming forward today.

**1640**

#### SWANSEA AREA RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

**The Chair:** Would representatives from the Swansea Area Ratepayers Association please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Roberts. Welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes today to make your presentation.

**Mr William Roberts:** We want to thank you for allowing us to speak today. For those who may not be aware, the Swansea Area Ratepayers Association predated the existence of Swansea and has continued to exist after Swansea was amalgamated with Forest Hill in Toronto.

I want say at the beginning that we do not support the proposal as it's presently worded. We find a sufficient lack of specificity in regard to the neighbourhood committees to guarantee that neighbourhoods will thrive, not just survive.

A place name does not a healthy neighbourhood make. That a name may continue to be associated with an area does not mean the area is healthy. Neighbourhoods can be encouraged or discouraged and some will survive no matter what, just as some plants will survive no matter how little attention a gardener gives the garden.

We could find no references to community or ward committees, unless they are subsumed within the category of neighbourhood committees. The only references to neighbourhood committees we could find were that they were not local boards, that city council shall establish neighbourhood committees and that a transition team will hold public consultation on them. The doctrine "delegata potestas non potest non delegari" applies here. These committees will only be advisory, without any real legal power to enhance and nurture neighbourhoods.

We could of course simply attack the proposal. Instead, we wish to explain the weakness in the legislation and suggest possible solutions which are designed to carry out the intent of ensuring neighbourhood enhancement.

**Wards:** We recommend smaller wards not to exceed approximately 30,000 residents or three wards per electoral district. The move towards a macropolitical unit needs to be balanced at the ward level. Wards should not be so large that they are too large to reflect the local character of an area. The proposed ward size of 50,000 residents would encompass five or more neighbourhoods, while a ward of 30,000 residents would encompass somewhere between two and three neighbourhoods. The proposed ward committees, which are not legislated, do not provide a sufficiently strong counterbalance to the centrist drive that would be reflected in a 45-member council and its central bureaucracy.

But 44 councillors is a large council. The addition of approximately 22 further councillors would not change this, but balances off the new large municipality. You will still have halved the number of politicians and more than half the support staff.

Given the smaller ward size, there should be no need for executive assistants. City councillors will not be able to avoid residents by hiding behind a shield of executive assistants.

If certain functions are legislated into the hands of area/district boards/councils, our term for neighbourhood committees made up of elected councillors, then it is our belief that the council will still be effective.

Wards should reflect distinct geographic and economic areas and should not be arbitrarily related to electoral districts.

It should be remembered that when the dominion/provincial ridings were created, in many cases boundaries followed existing municipal boundaries and thereby cut through cultural and economic areas. In some cases, the dominion/provincial riding boundary within the existing municipalities cut through existing neighbourhoods such as Parkdale and the Junction in the west end of the city. By honouring the new dominion/provincial riding boundaries, you will not reflect or bring together existing neighbourhoods. This creates an obstacle and, if compounded with large wards, a distinct threat to the existence of healthy neighbourhoods.

By requiring there to be two wards based on the electoral boundaries, the inequities will be ossified into the legislation.

Smaller wards increase accountability of councillors by reducing the need for support staff and the cost of getting elected. We do not have to explain to those of you who have run for office that the costs of getting elected and

the dependency on political parties, unions, fund-raisers etc increase as the number of voters increases.

The issue is not the number of politicians per se but the amount paid to them and their assistants. Reducing the number of politicians does not necessarily result in significant savings and in some cases actually increases the cost where the salaries of the remaining politicians are increased to reflect the increased workload and additional assistants are added to their staffs.

Most recently, with the direct election to Metro the number of politicians at the city level dropped from 22 city councillors, including indirectly elected Metro councillors, and one mayor to 16 city councillors and one mayor, plus eight Metro councillors. In addition, the local politicians, on the basis that they were now responsible for more persons, had executive assistants added to their staff. Before the 1988 changes, such assistants were assigned only to members of the executive and the mayor because of their extra duties. It was assumed that city councillors would be able to directly deal with their constituents and the problems within their wards. After 1988, the total salaries increased. In effect, the electorate now pays for persons they cannot directly turf out, and the politicians have become more remote. Executive assistants can at times be nothing but human voice mail designed to keep the public from the elected politician.

In tying wards to electoral districts, will not wards have to be changed when the electoral districts change in 10 years? It is not desirable that the total number councillors should be tied into external changes relating to provincial or dominion policy rather than the need to provide local accountable government.

Wards should be combined into district/area boards/councils which may or may not always relate to existing municipalities. The legislation should not leave this issue to be dealt with by the transition team. A minimum/maximum number of councillors should be set out, depending on the duties given to these boards and councils.

I'm going to skip some of the issues that I talk about here and move on.

It is recommended that area/district board/councils be set up with a minimum of 120,000 to a maximum of 500,000 residents, with specific duties given to these area or district boards or councils. The minimum size will be dependent on duties assigned.

From the day Swansea was amalgamated with the city of Toronto and the village of Forest Hill, there were pressures on the village to conform to the larger view. These were resisted. In our experience one of the critical issues in helping to give a sense of community to the Swansea area was having zoning bylaws reflect the character of built form. This has been a constant point of dispute from time to time, with the drive from some city departments to have a centralized bylaw into a one-size-fits-all, easier to administer for the bureaucrats bylaw.

Ensuring that cultural, recreational and meeting space was available to the area; fighting to keep the Swansea Memorial Library — as I say, I'm skipping this because of the time frames here.

Based on our experience we strongly recommend that the powers we have found necessary to enhance neighbourhoods be set out in the legislation. The minimum

duties which should be assigned in the legislation to the area/district boards/councils should be as follows, in order to ensure healthy neighbourhoods as has been promised:

Zoning and building: enforcement and planning and local official plans to reflect local neighbourhood issues;

Parks and recreation: to allow communities to decide what services they need;

Libraries;

Local roads: parking regulations can significantly impact on local businesses and neighbourhoods and should reflect local requirements.

The new city of Toronto need not have a final say on such matters if the province so decides; however, should the province wish to give control to the city council, the decisions of area/district boards/councils should only be overruled by a two-thirds vote of all city councillors. The precedence for requiring a higher standard to overrule planning bodies existed in the previous planning legislation, where planning boards could be overridden by a two-thirds vote of council.

Certain duties assigned to councils under the Planning Act should be assigned under the legislation to the area/district boards/councils; for example, the holding of zoning and official plan hearings and committee of adjustment decisions with a level of finality that gives credibility to the process. If the area/district boards and councils can be overruled easily by a bare majority of the city council, then you will still have councillors far removed from the area making decisions affecting an area which they have little or no knowledge of.

Also, under the Planning Act only councils have certain responsibilities, and unless the power to deal with these is legislated to area/district boards and councils, they will not be legally able to hold official hearings. The new city council will have to hold deliberations for the whole of the city in regard to planning and zoning. If the neighbourhood committees presently referred to in the legislation hold such hearings, they will be recommendations only, with no finality, and as a result will be viewed as sham public processes.

By allowing a two-thirds override vote, you could achieve the balance to ensure that if an area or district board gets too far out of balance with the overall goals, then council can intervene, while providing certainty at the area/district board/council level.

Hiring and firing of staff should be the responsibility of area/district boards/councils and the legislation should reflect this. Overall budget and staffing could be a responsibility of city council.

To explain to you, in the 1970s, the city of Toronto planning board had their own staff. When these were removed from the planning board, at one point when there was a dispute between the planning board and the city of Toronto, the staff withdrew themselves on the basis that there was a conflict of interest, and they had to follow their employer's dictates. I can easily see the same thing happening when an area/board or council of politicians makes a recommendation, asks the planners to produce a report and they say, "Sorry, the council says we can't," and walks away from the room.

There are examples today of staff reporting to boards, whether they are community centre boards or other

boards, where the budget is set by the main body but the staff can be hired and fired by the board. If the board hires and fires the staff, they can't walk away, even if the budget is set by the larger body.

We oppose the creation of a mega head of council. The costs and the rest of it will simply create a super-politician.

Basically the problems right now date back to attempts to improve the 1953 model. It began with the amalgamation of the municipalities into larger units, but it actually got to the point when there was a decision to have a direct election, which at that time was going to improve voter involvement. It didn't. It increased the confusion. Swansea actually opposed that. We felt that all it would do is duplicate services, increase the pay for politicians and the first thing the politician would do was build a mega-monument to themselves. We were told we were wrong. It turned out we were right.

With all due respect to those who see the magicked as the new Jerusalem and a miracle on earth, we can only suggest that unfortunately to date it seems that the proponents have yet to receive a revelation not dissimilar to that Saul received on the road to Damascus. Please remember, the path to hell was paved with good intentions.

While what exists now has serious problems — the lack of specificity in the proposed legislation; the failure to delineate the duties under the Planning Act for the neighbourhood committees — the failure to indicate how neighbourhoods will be allowed to thrive not just survive makes the path laid out to date a living hell on earth for communities and neighbourhoods that will be left to struggle on their own against the doctrinaire forces of the "big picture" and "one size fits all," who have no use for the middle class, families or other impediments to the "greater good."

#### 1650

It should be noted that those who support the magicked often cite how there will be one set of rules and that the small businesses and small homeowners will no longer have influence with city council. If the persons who inhabit neighbourhoods will no longer have a say in how their areas operate in the face of the need of the greater good, then why should they struggle and not simply move away, as has happened in so many American cities? Toronto's small homeowners and storekeepers choose to stay and fight, not flee, but with no effective tools, why would anyone stay?

This is not the first time the small land owners have been attacked as an impediment to the greater good. One only has to think of the 1920s and 1930s in Russia where Stalin attacked the small farmers as a special interest group blocking the greater and stronger collective that would make Mother Russia a world power. We all know how bankrupt the great collectives became when the government mandated rather than the community grew and created.

While some may view ratepayer and residents' associations as only another special interest group, they have a long history in Toronto and the British Commonwealth. Ward councils appointed by local councillors will not have the same effect but will turn such organizations into political organizations resembling more closely the Tam-

many Hall form of government than that which has grown up in Ontario and fostered a strong sense of community. We ask you to carefully review the draft legislation, given its failure to clearly set out the duties and obligations of what is to replace the present system.

What follows is a summary, and after that there's a brief curriculum vitae relating to me and at the very back — I'll just point this out quickly to you. One of the books I have was published in 1898 and it shows the 1897 budget of the city of Toronto. Roughly 74% went to fire, police and schools; 2% went to the politicians. What exactly is new with the budgetary things now? That was a single monetary council operating at a time when you didn't have all the services. A hundred years later, we're still dealing with the same problems. That, basically, is the submission.

**Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South):** Mr Roberts, I'm very interested in the argument about the number of people a councillor can serve. When I was a member of Mississauga city council I had 51,000 and I served at the same time as a member of Peel regional council. I wonder whether you have any strong evidence about the problem with that, because frankly it was not a problem for any of us. We obviously gave excellent representation because those councils were always re-elected.

**Mr Roberts:** I could make three quick comments on that. One is, when Swansea was a village we had about eight local councillors, a deputy reeve and reeve who were all part-time, didn't get large salaries, and it worked quite well. We didn't have a big bureaucracy because the politicians performed the functions some of the bureaucrats performed.

In Toronto, as the wards got bigger, what we've noticed over the last six years is the politicians are more remote. What you've got to understand in an area like Toronto is, the neighbourhoods grew up on their own. They're not homogeneous, they're not new, they have unique problems relating. You can look at the difference between south Etobicoke and north Etobicoke. What works in north Etobicoke won't necessarily work in south Etobicoke; what works in Parkdale will not necessarily work in Swansea and vice versa.

What we have found with the larger wards is it's easier for those councillors to get re-elected because the mere cost to remove a politician, as is found in the American studies — the more expensive it becomes to remove the politician, the easier it is for the politician who is in place and has his political machinery in place to remain in place. It's much harder for grass-roots movements to come out of an area and defeat that politician simply because one small area will not necessarily be able to mobilize the votes to take out a larger area.

The larger the wards got, the more remote the politicians got, in our experience in Toronto, and since you're applying this in the Toronto area, I've got to go from my experience in Toronto, not the experience in Mississauga.

**Mrs Marland:** The experience in Mississauga is based on an amalgamation 22 years ago of 13 different boroughs and towns. It's been well demonstrated I think that there are exactly what you said. There are local interests within all of those communities and those local interests have been very well addressed.

**Mr Roberts:** I have actually represented a couple of ratepayer groups in that area and I wouldn't necessarily agree that is their viewpoint. What they really believed was they could get some things done but they couldn't really resist the major forces.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Roberts, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

### JACK DIAMOND

**The Chair:** Would Jack Diamond please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Diamond. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes to make a presentation. If there is some time left over at the end, I'll ask the Liberal caucus to ask questions.

**Mr Jack Diamond:** Thank you. I don't have a written statement to hand out. The subject is a vast one and I won't be dealing with all of it. It can't be done in the time and quite honestly I don't think the time assigned to the consideration of this bill is sufficient either, just as I don't have enough time to deal with it all.

I want to deal with a few items. Let me deal with the first one and that's the question of the principle, in my view, that wealth distribution functions should not be placed on the property tax. That's the first principle. Quite clearly, wealth distribution functions in terms of progressive income tax ought to be dealt with by governments that have a much wider scope and scale, such as the provincial and federal governments. Putting welfare, which is a wealth distribution function, on real estate will have three negative effects.

First of all, it creates unpredictability which will exacerbate the economic swings. I speak here not simply as an architect and a planner but as an owner of commercial property in the downtown. Second, it is obviously, by every calculation made, too great a load for the municipalities to bear. They can't borrow, a consequence which I'll deal with. Third, I think it's going to create distortions in the property market.

I am one of those who very much favours the whole notion of an even assessment for taxation across the GTA and across the province, but that even assessment, the reform to even assessment, will be more than wiped out by the fact that Metro will have a far greater load to bear than many municipalities, so these distortions will be exacerbated by swings. During a recession, welfare costs go up, therefore real estate taxes will go up. That's a crazy way to run a railroad. That isn't the way in which real estate ought to be dealing with those kinds of income redistribution problems.

Second, and I said I would deal with it, as municipalities cannot borrow, they can do one of two things: They can raise taxes or cut services. Whether you do one or the other or a combination of the two, businesses and residents will move out. We have a serious problem if we tamper with the engine of Toronto, GTA, the provincial and even the Canadian economy.

Let me tell you something interesting that we found out because I'm a former commissioner of the GTA Task Force report with the Golden commission. We looked at what the business advantages are of Toronto. When we looked at and talked to the locator companies in Chicago and in Geneva, they said to us: "You've got good access

to markets. You've got a good workforce. You've got good transportation. You're better than most in telecommunications. But 12 of the cities that have more than four million in North America have those. You have a quality of life that is your business advantage."

We all know what those are — health and education — but let me tell you what some of the more compelling ones are: security and our entertainment sector. If we have good residential neighbourhoods — and those are under threat — and we lose our security, I can tell you that Toronto, which is after New York the most important financial centre in North America, will be at a business disadvantage. So this question of downloading on to the municipalities, I don't think the effects are well enough understood that we challenge and put at risk one of the most important geese that lays the golden eggs for this province. That's the first point.

The second point is that obviously I don't believe Bill 103 has disentangled. All it's done is to shift the proportions of who bears what. It's not clear where the responsibilities lie. It hasn't been clear about shifting it so that people understand exactly who pays and who does what, so that's just as confused and I think inappropriate in scale, as I've said, in terms of downloading welfare.

### 1700

The bill is intended obviously for cost-efficiencies and effectiveness. It absolutely ignores what we found to be one of the significant issues about cost savings, and that's in the shape and form of the development of the area. That is the question of density, of infrastructure costs, of the long-term benefits of seeing to it we have a reasonable compactness and an effective utilization of our strategic investments. One billion a year will be the extra cost if we don't do it properly.

The kind of penny ante stuff that has been looked at by saving a few fire chiefs, which every expert has said that above a million people you don't have economies of scale, will be absolutely distorted by the continuing loss of control in terms of urban form. I think if we want to look at real cost savings, we need to look at this again.

There is a second and final point I want to make that is, to me, much bigger than all of this. I think one of the distinguishing features of Canadian society is our social equity. It's a very exceptional balance that's been struck. I came to this country as an immigrant, and I think it is a magnificent one. This country has social equity. That balance is a delicate one. Not many countries in the world have struck it.

If we take too much money out of the public sector, if we distort those levels of private and public interests that we have, and it's an amazing balance between private interests and public interests, if they only go to private interests, we lose that balance and I think we lose the distinguishing and one of the most extraordinary achievements of Canadian society.

I've kept it brief. I'd be happy to answer questions.

It seems to me, in conclusion, I really urge a reconsideration of withdrawal of Bill 103, because the stakes are simply too high for us to risk on a possibility that it may or may not work. Let's have a time to reconsider Crombie, Golden and Bill 103, all of them, among reasonable people, with the intention of making this

society work decently. I think we need to take the time. Withdraw the bill and let's get to it. We can do it in six months, I'm sure.

**Mr Colle:** Given Mr Diamond's hard work with the Golden commission, I'm going to give an opportunity to the Premier to perhaps respond to your important comments and maybe ask you some questions. I'll give up my time to the Premier.

**The Chair:** If anyone on the government caucus wants to ask questions, that's totally up to them.

**Hon Mr Harris:** I'll ask one. I appreciate your comments on welfare but 103 has nothing to do with welfare. But it is an issue that I think is important and I agree with you on the importance for job creation and the economic advantage of our social programs. I think the excellence and affordability of health care, of quality of life beyond just health care, and welfare, as you talked about it —

**Mr Diamond:** Is our business advantage.

**Hon Mr Harris:** — is a tremendous attraction to business, and I think we share a goal of trying to strengthen and enhance that. I just want to assure you of that.

A lot of your comments had to do with that part of it, which is Who Does What, which deals with the whole province. I understand there are some who disagree with whether we can accomplish that the way we're going. We do have six months or a year, close to a year, to work on that with municipalities and our municipal partners.

To deal with whether it will be one city with 40 or 50 neighbourhood community inputs or four cities — I think as the Golden commissioners who were on talked about — it didn't reference but I think it was clear you were looking at units that would lead to about four cities. That's an issue that if it's not decided in time for elections this fall goes to the year 2000. It could be caught up in another provincial election. Many say it's 10 years away that there's a window to deal with it. I think Golden was very explicit that if you don't deal with it now, it may never get done. So I am concerned about that aspect of it.

I wonder if I could ask you about what I think was a very important recommendation of Golden, and that is the relationship of Metro, whether it's one city or four cities, with the GTA and the efficiencies that need to be gained there in more seamless service deliveries, whether you have any advice or comments, because that is to be negotiated and worked out and is key at the same time as we move ahead with Metro.

**Mr Diamond:** The reason I dealt with these other issues is that it's my view, and as you know, Premier, I put this forward on the GTA report, that these elements cannot be dealt with in isolation. It's a highly integrated question. Land use planning, governance and taxation, if they're seen separately — it's easy to solve one without the other, but the fact is, the reality is that they're all integrated, and we haven't been dealing with them on an integrated basis. That's why I think it's not wise to have Bill 103 go forward before the other questions are resolved. They have to be put together.

The problems with amalgamation are many, and they are, in my view, that they don't deal as a priority with the question of the GTA and its relationships. That should

be the priority, not the amalgamation. The amalgamation of Metro is a non-problem. It has not resolved the question of the large urban area. In fact what the cynical might say is that all that is happening is to create an entity large enough to accept an inappropriate burden of welfare. It's nothing to do with cost savings or inefficiencies.

**Hon Mr Harris:** But we're asking North Bay to take welfare with 50,000, and Callander —

**Mr Diamond:** I understand that, but they have a different —

**Hon Mr Harris:** That has nothing to do with —

**The Chair:** Excuse me, gentlemen.

**Mr Diamond:** I understand that. If I can just finish.

**The Chair:** Mr Diamond, can you finish up? We've just gone beyond the time.

**Mr Diamond:** I know I have limited time, but I have to answer the Premier's question, if I might.

The issue of local access is crucial in terms of small government. We need a federation of municipalities. We also need competition between small entities. The answer ought to be how small is the unit of government we can make, not how big. I think you would agree with that. That would be a consistent position for a Conservative government to take. Instead of amalgamating the municipalities into one large component of 53,000 citizens for one council representative versus 23,000 now, and in your riding of North Bay 5,000 — it's interesting to make those comparisons — we need local representation, government as small as possible. And the local governments, in my view, ought to be able set the mill rate with an even assessment so they can demonstrate how efficient they are.

**The Chair:** Sorry to interrupt, Mr Diamond, but we've gone beyond your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward and making a presentation.

**Mr Diamond:** There's more.

**The Chair:** Would James Binnie please come forward. Not here.

#### BRENT HAWKES

**The Chair:** Brent Hawkes. Good afternoon, Mr Hawkes. Welcome to the committee.

**Rev Brent Hawkes:** I've been practising with my congregation the last few Sundays, trying to preach a 10-minute sermon so I can get all this in, so I should be able to do my best.

**Interjection:** Is that shorter or longer?

**Mr Hawkes:** Shorter than usual. I also appreciate the opportunity to appear before the members of the Legislature and not have to yell from the galleries to catch their attention. I appreciate this opportunity.

I want to begin by declaring that I have not been coached by John Sewell and I have never been a chauffeur for any politician, but I had been a candidate for the NDP in the last provincial election. Some folks are blaming me for this legislation, that if I'd worked harder and won, they might not have had it, but I don't take any blame for this.

What we do have to recognize is the worldwide support for the quality of life here in the city of Toronto, that everything can be improved and should be improved;

improve, yes, dismantle, no. I concede that sometimes perceptions and reality are not the same things, but I want to share with you some of the perceptions, some of the feelings of my congregation and I believe many people in the city of Toronto.

It feels like — and again this may not be reality, but it's the perception — a big, insensitive machine is rolling along, squashing everything in sight it doesn't approve of. It feels like the studies are being ignored because they don't say what you wanted them to say. It feels like your mind is made up and these hearings are but a necessary evil you have to put up with. It feels like you've gone against the various studies and at the last minute thrown in a recommendation on amalgamation out of the blue and caught people by surprise. It feels like financial savings have become a god in an idolater's way that everything else can be sacrificed to. It feels like you're risking the future of our cities on a gamble that's not even a smart bet. Will this destroy the health of downtown Toronto or not?

Toronto is a great city, and it's a great city of various minority groups. Local government has many advantages. It helps us to get along with each other, because we feel welcomed, we feel empowered and we feel a part of the city of Toronto as we know it. At the city level, on the whole, people feel their voices are heard, that someone will listen to them when a crisis arises. This happens at the local government level; it does not happen as well at Metro or provincial and federal levels.

The move to remove the local level of government — the higher the number of constituents a politician represents makes it less accessible for individual citizens and organizations and the fewer times we see our elected politicians and the fewer times we hear from our elected politicians. When people lose access, they feel that no one listens, that no one cares, and when they feel they have no say, they feel frustrated and tensions rise. None of us wants the kind of tensions that we see in many American cities.

#### 1710

It was the city of Toronto that was the first government to give employment protection to gay and lesbian employees. It took Metro another 20 years to hear the concern and respond, and it took the province 14 more years to take action. It was the city of Toronto that spent money to have a study done about the relationship between the police and the gay and lesbian community when violence was increasing after the bath raids in 1981. Neither Metro nor the province would act, and as a result of the city's action, the recommendations that came out of the study have greatly improved the relationships between the police and the gay and lesbian community. In fact, I think now we're one of the model cities in North America for that kind of relationship. It is the mayor of the city of Toronto who shows up at our community activities and major events, not the chair of Metro council and not the Premier of the province.

I could also give examples with respect to the funding of the arts, the funding of AIDS support, the support for cultural diversity, which I feel are greater at the local level. These are just a few examples of how local government has been more responsive government.

You've heard many other examples from people who do a much better job than I'm doing at presenting the case against forced amalgamation.

I want to ask how we can get out of this mess, because I feel like we're in a mess. There are sides drawn and that it's difficult to get out of the mess. How can government really hear and respond to the citizens' concerns while saving face and while pushing for the kinds of reforms that government members want to see? How can we get out of the mess?

I'm sometimes accused of being naïve, but I think there is a way out of this mess. As a pastor of a large congregation, there have been occasions when I have proposed something and pushed it and then realized I needed to back off, to admit that I acted in haste even with the best of intentions. I then had to set up a process for true consultation in order to achieve a better result and to get more buy-in. Whenever I've had to back off in this way, I have always been greeted with support and even admiration by the folks who have seen that kind of shift.

I would never counsel a mutiny among the back-benchers, especially since the Premier was almost still here to hear that, but partisan, competitive and even vicious party politics are turning most people off. They're tired of seeing allegiance to party leadership take precedence over listening to people, over doing what's right and being seen to do what's right.

I ask the Conservative members of this committee to consider the situation before you as an opportunity to gain the support and even admiration of the citizens by deciding it's time to back off. It's time to say that even out of the best of intentions, you're moving too fast; to recommend to your government that it take the time to consult and see if there is a better way to proceed. It's not worth the gamble to dismantle what's recognized as world class.

I don't believe I'm alone in saying that the quality of downtown Toronto is directly connected to the issue of accessibility, the visibility of our local politicians and the responsiveness that local government gives.

Sixteen years ago today, this very day, February 19, I was four days into a 25-day fast, drinking only water, asking for an investigation of the relationship between the police and the lesbian and gay community. We were having more demonstrations and there was more violence. We went to Metro, we went to the province and we went to the police commission and said, "Do something about this situation." None of them responded — none of them.

It was only the city of Toronto — and I believe it was not just because local politicians knew me, some of them, but more importantly they knew the situation. They knew that things were bad out there on the streets. They knew that something had to be done and they took action.

A Toronto newspaper suggested that they let me starve. In that case, for me, local government made a big difference, but I also believe that it made a better city and a better life in this city for all of its citizens. It responded when nobody else would respond. Here you have a "community leader" who's asking you not to take away from me one of the vehicles that I have to try and improve the life of this city for all of its citizens and

make it more difficult, as a community leader, to get harmony and reconciliation in the city. This may be a dramatic example, but it's an example of the hundreds and hundreds of ways that local government hears better because it's closer to people.

We have much work to do, certainly, to make our cities a better place for all its citizens and we have much work to do to ensure that our financial resources are spent wisely, but it's especially in times when we're shuffling those resources around between various levels of government that we need local government that listens best.

I thought it was supposed to be a Conservative value to conserve the best. That's what I hear from Conservatives, that one of their values is conserving the best. I also thought it was being said again and again that Toronto is the best, so why are we not conserving the best, improving it, but not dismantling it?

I would ask you to try to find a better way to really hear the fears that are being expressed. They're not being whipped up. These are legitimate fears from the citizens, to please step back, to try to hear our fears, to try to do what's right and to try to do it the right way. Please do not gamble on the future health of our cities. Please do not force amalgamation on us. Thank you.

**Mr Marchese:** Pastor Hawkes, welcome here. I just want to make reference to something the Canadian Union of Public Employees unearthed. It was in one of the documents and M. Harris was quoted as saying, "Ontarians must once again feel like citizens with a stake in the public life of their province, rather than as spectators who pay the bills but have little say in deciding what government does." I'm assuming that all the deputants we've had here, over 180, 200, who are opposing this bill feel passionately about what's happening.

The Toronto Star in one of its editorials says this of people like you, "The critics care not so much to inform but foment dissent, stir up anger, confuse, befuddle" — which means the same thing — "scaremonger and defeat Bill 103 by whatever means necessary." How do you react to things like that?

**Mr Hawkes:** I think it's very easy to dismiss people who try to present an alternative point of view to categorize them in that way and dismiss the viewpoint. I would ask you not to pay as much attention to who is saying it but to the arguments that are being presented again and again and the fears that people have about their future and the future of their cities.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Hawkes, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

Is Harry Broersma here? James McAughey? We'll recess until 5:30. I don't think Chris Barnes is here either. We'll recess just until 5:30.

*The committee recessed from 1718 to 1729.*

#### HARRY BROERSMA

**The Chair:** I understand Mr Broersma is here. Mr Broersma, would you take a chair. Welcome to the committee, sir. You have 10 minutes tonight to make a presentation.

**Mr Harry Broersma:** I believe one Toronto is a good thing. In the interests of brevity I will address the following five reasons why I so believe.

Reason one: I like the idea of fewer politicians. When I told my friends and neighbours that I was going to speak today, I asked them for their comments as well. Basically their comments could be distilled into one central theme: "I will support anything that will get rid of 100 politicians." I realize with some dismay that the one-Toronto plan will not get rid of quite that many. However, the trend is in the right direction.

Reason two: The world thinks I live in Toronto. I live in Leaside, a community that is geographically part of the borough of East York. On a daily basis my wife and I receive in the order of four to six pieces of addressed mail. This mail is all addressed to 45 Donegall Drive, Toronto, not East York. The only mail we receive addressed to East York originates from the municipality itself, either tax or hydro bills. It is clear that the outside world thinks of us living in Toronto, not East York.

East York is not a community. It's a geographic area. Leaside, a community in East York, has more in common with the Davisville area, west of Bayview and part of Toronto, than it has with the rest of East York across the Don Valley and the Don Valley Parkway.

When Forbes voted Toronto one of the best cities to live in, what part do we think they were referring to?

Reason three: One Toronto will provide savings by removing duplication of services. I accept the estimates provided by KPMG about the potential savings that will accrue through consolidation. I expect and hope that their numbers are actually pessimistic. Business and industry have been going through consolidation and downsizing for most of the nineties. KPMG's estimates show savings in the order of 5%. Industry has been increasing efficiency in the order of 25% to 30%. Isn't it about time municipalities joined the 1990s?

There is a lot of discussion about whether or not bigger is better or whether consolidation brings efficiencies. Examples are quoted by both sides, drawn from business and even citing the experience of Detroit, which lost its downtown as part of the move to the suburbs in the 1950s and 1960s. That occurred in many North American cities, even Toronto. I believe this was the time when communities like Willowdale were created. I can't quite fathom the connection, and I think as an argument it is intellectually dishonest. The beauty of being able to draw upon so many examples is that there are plenty for each side to pick their favourites to prove their respective cases.

I'll only note that Asea Brown Bovry, a Swiss company and accepted by many to be one of the world's best-run corporations, has in excess of 1,000 subsidiaries. It manages quite well with an executive group of 12 people. Are those against the one Toronto of the belief that we don't have the talent available to make it happen?

It doesn't take rocket science to show that amalgamation or consolidation done right reaps benefits. Similarly, incorrectly done, everyone loses. Perhaps more effort should be given to looking at ways to make sure we do it properly.

Reason four: The current system doesn't work. I'll use the example of taxes. Since 1988, when we moved to

East York, our taxes have increased 44%; that is, the East York tax component has increased 44%. To give credit where it's due, they have remained the same for the last three years. However, my Metro taxes for that same time frame increased 68%. We underwent an assessment increase of just over 8% during this same period due to renovations, but still, I think the picture is there.

During this same time frame we've seen the price of a VCR drop from \$1,000 to \$250, and \$600 will get you a 27-inch stereo television, whereas in 1988 it got you a relatively plain 21-incher.

Reason five: I do not believe we are well served by our municipal governments. The mayor and council of East York are using public funds, my money, to campaign against one Toronto. Where do they get the gall to use public funds to campaign for their jobs? Similarly, East York Hydro Commission is printing and distributing, at public expense, a diatribe against Toronto consolidation and a Hydro consolidation. Somehow their arithmetic shows that this will increase costs.

You wonder where management such as this is found. They wouldn't last a fiscal quarter in the real world. Their arguments have been shallow and emotional. This unprofessional behaviour has been instrumental in putting me in the one-Toronto camp. Interestingly it also puts me in the position of funding both the "for" and the "against" side.

To sum up, the establishment always votes against change. If they had vision, they would have instituted the change themselves. Louis XIV did not think that his beheading would advance the state of France, and similarly, I doubt that the Romanovs believed that being dethroned and subsequently assassinated would help Mother Russia. But, sorry, I will not eat cake.

I am not afraid of change. I am not so conceited as to think that I have all the answers, but neither should the mayors be. I look to change as an opportunity, and wish they would also, to turn Toronto into a great city.

Those are my comments.

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Broersma, thank you for a very concise presentation. My key question related to your presentation would be around politicians. You point out that you like fewer politicians, yet the constant theme that's been reiterated here by a number of groups and organizations and individuals over the last few days is that as you get bigger, all politicians axiomatically become more remote, that they're not available, they're not accessible. Would you tend to agree with that generalization on the basis of, "The larger the representation, the larger the organization, politicians become more inaccessible," or is it a factor of behaviour of each politician?

**Mr Broersma:** It's probably a factor of behaviour. I don't think it needs to be the case. It becomes a management issue. Obviously running departments or what have you, you need to have good management in place, and I think with good management in place, then there's no reason why they should become remote from the situation.

**Mr Hastings:** In other words, how you utilize your time.

**Mr Broersma:** Exactly. That's right. Obviously it's also in part the job certainly of the provincial-level local

constituencies, but in the city the part of local community groups to ensure their councillors are aware of what the issues are.

**Mr Hastings:** My other question relates to an earlier submission made by an executive director of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund on February 12. She maintains that if there are businessmen in this government — they were both in quotations — they really don't understand how complex organizations function and therefore they wouldn't really know how to interact and put together and consolidate. She said this, and I'd like your comments on it: "Based on my understanding of the recent package of bills and proposed bills that this government has dropped on us in the last few months, I can only conclude that there are some fundamental principles of good governance in a large organization that this government obviously does not understand."

By the way, this deputant also has an MBA from the University of Toronto. She made the case that we have no business case, that we really are groping in the dark. What is your impression, and based on her comments, would you agree with her conclusions of how we are approaching these vital items of change?

**Mr Broersma:** I would not agree. I think she's oversimplifying. I think this is a major step for Toronto or the greater Toronto area. There are things in life every day that are uncertain, but for some things you may not know the numbers but you know that they are self-evident. I think that's in many cases how business moves ahead and that's how business is able to go through consolidations. In the amount of time that a company announces it's going to take over or attempt to take over or merge with another, even though they go through reviews, there is certainly not enough time to cover off each and every step of the process. But there are many things that feel in the gut that you're moving in the right direction, and obviously these things cannot all be sorted out beforehand.

**Mr Parker:** I just want to point out that although your experience with taxes in East York has been favourable, that hasn't been the story over the past 10 years for all East York taxpayers. From 1984 to 1994 there was an 80% increase in local taxes in East York. The assessment over that time increased by less than 1%, but there was a major shift over that period from the commercial-industrial sector to the residential sector, so many East York residential taxpayers suffered severely over that period because of the loss of commercial taxes and increase in costs. Fortunately you missed part of that.

You live in Leaside, so do I, in the same community. Leaside was a town once upon a time, until 1967. It was amalgamated into East York at that time. We've heard a lot about the concept of community in these hearings, and I want you to tell us about the sense of community in Leaside and whether it survived the shock of amalgamation in 1967.

**Mr Broersma:** We only moved to Leaside in the late 1980s. I don't know what Leaside was before amalgamation, but certainly we moved to Leaside; we did not move to East York. It was very much what we saw in Leaside that we wanted, and today I think Leaside has to a very

large degree what we look for in a community in which to live.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Broersma. I'm sorry I can't allow you to expound too much on that because we've just exceeded your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this evening to make your presentation.

1740

### JAMES McAUGHEY

**The Chair:** Would James McAughey please come forward. Welcome, sir, to the committee.

**Mr James McAughey:** I'd first like to thank the committee for allowing me to come here and speak on this issue. I'm a third-year co-op student at the University of Waterloo, and despite my being away from Toronto for the past few months, I've followed this debate very closely because I think it concerns all of us, especially my family.

My family has a long tradition and record of community service and involvement in Toronto, Weston, and particularly Etobicoke. I'm proud to say my great-grandfather was the master stonemason for the main tower of Casa Loma, a job he used to support a growing family during the Depression. My grandmother has told me many times that, growing up, she was used to travellers and poor people coming to the door, asking for a meal and getting one. It was common back then. It was just accepted.

This example of community service was followed by my grandparents. My grandfather was available to help anyone in the neighbourhood in house repairs or little handyman projects. He spent many afternoons in the local church fixing the plumbing and repairing windows. My grandmother has also contributed in the same sense. She helped out in bake sales and other local community events.

The tradition of community spirit is now a standard in my family that must be lived up to, and of course many families in Toronto and the municipalities have the same tradition. The feelings and examples of community spirit are what makes this city, province and country so great.

These acts that contribute so much to each neighbourhood, to give each one an individual identity and flavour, are done for no other reason than that Torontonians believe that these acts benefit the neighbourhood, city and their neighbours. People help one another for the sake of helping a fellow person. People are friendly to their neighbours for the sake of friendship. People contribute to the community so they can be part of a close-knit community, feel safe and have a sense of belonging.

These actions are not a result of, or linked in any way with, the number of politicians they elect. Culture is not linked with, connected to or dependent upon politicians. A culture does not get stronger the more politicians you elect. Believing this, that our community characteristics are in fact dependent on politicians, means that we must elect more of them to make our identity stronger. I, as well as most other people I know, reject that notion.

I take great offence and insult to the argument that this bill's reduction in the number of municipal councillors will in any way have a negative effect on Toronto's

character or community spirit. My family's contributions to this city and their neighbourhood were made on their belief that they were doing the right thing and that the community was benefiting as a result. I believe this to be true of the rest of Toronto's population.

I do not know of a person who has done a charitable action, a good deed or contributed to the community as a result of the number of politicians elected. If this were true, why do such places as Willowdale or Agincourt, just to name a couple, remain identifiable and distinct places to live? Somehow these communities and neighbourhoods have retained their identities without electing more politicians, with fewer. I encourage opponents of Bill 103 to go to Leaside, Weston or Swansea and see if having fewer politicians from amalgamation in 1966 has caused a decay or weakening of community spirit.

Some of the loudest opponents of Bill 103 have been the mayors of the six municipalities, who argue that their communities' identities will be destroyed and eroded, that the new council, 44 councillors and one mayor, will be undemocratic, unresponsive and that people in the municipalities will be undergoverned.

If this is what they truly believe, then I ask the members of the committee why they, in December 1996, proposed a council, which I guess they believed would be democratic, responsive and the right number of politicians, of 48 councillors and six mayors. Notice how they keep the same number of mayors but they give up a few councillors' jobs.

Who are these nine extra superpoliticians who will be the thin line between democracy and anarchy here in the united Toronto? The mayors have been conveniently forgetting this when speaking about Bill 103, that the representation by councillors of the people of Toronto in Bill 103 is close to what they themselves recommended.

By having one level of government, the people of Toronto can be better represented. If residents have a problem with roads or garbage collection, they will know who to go to instead of going through a process of which politician, which bureaucracy to contact.

If there's a pothole on a street, who are they supposed to call? If the sidewalk needs cleaning, who do they call? I don't know of too many people who find the task of finding which local government to call and going through the bureaucracy — who really wants to do that? Having one level of government solves this problem.

Last winter when the mayors were coming up with their alternative, they admitted that between them, \$200 million could be saved through new-found administrative efficiencies. Why didn't they want to find these efficiencies until legislation was brought forward that would eliminate their jobs? Did they not have the incentive to find savings until then? Did they not know how the municipality worked? Could they not cooperate with one another unless forced? If they didn't bring forward these new efficiencies, when were they going to? These are questions I have not heard adequate answers to. It raises concerns for me and other people I know. Are the politicians out there unwilling or unable to find savings for the taxpayer?

Right now there are six voices speaking for 2.3 million people, six voices that often conflict and argue with one

another. Amid these six voices and their arguing, the interests of those 2.3 million people are lost. Looking at the performance in cooperation of the mayors trying to fight the megacity, it's no wonder why we need one voice to represent the people at Queen's Park, Ottawa and internationally.

Why should Scarborough and Toronto fight one another to attract new businesses to the area? Turf wars between municipalities help no one. Toronto's population base is not growing. Our businesses are trying to compete globally while new infrastructure technology will be needed. This will put more pressure on a shrinking financial base. By consolidating the six municipalities, a more stable base will be there to help businesses compete with a solid financial foundation.

During the election, a constant theme came out of the Common Sense Revolution: less government and fewer politicians. I did not hear anyone complain about that, of any political stripe. This bill lives up to that theme. People have been calling for a referendum because it's not spelled out in the Common Sense Revolution that a megacity would be created. I guess they reject that the theme of less government and fewer politicians was there or that following the themes of an election is good enough.

I'd like to ask proponents of a referendum, when was the last time a referendum was held on a provincial bill? I cannot think of one. Having a referendum on this issue because it is not explicitly stated in an election platform sets a dangerous precedent. Governments will lose the ability to make decisions during a mandate as new issues arise or new facts become available. Governments must have the ability to do that to govern.

To summarize my position on Bill 103, this lives up to one of the major themes of the Common Sense Revolution. By having less government and fewer politicians, citizens of Toronto will be better represented by having an easier system of government to understand and access, one level of government that speaks with a loud and clear voice to business and governments.

Finally, our communities and neighbourhoods thrive because of the vibrant people who make them up, not because of politicians and artificial boundaries they impose.

**Mr Colle:** Why do you think a referendum is so dangerous?

**Mr McAughey:** I think the precedent will be set. Just the way elections are — the Common Sense Revolution was very explicit and set out very easy plans so people could know what to do. After two or three years, looking over the last few years, that mandate, the things they set out, are over. Having a referendum just because we didn't say explicitly — any time a new issue comes up you're setting the precedent that we must have a referendum. I think that inhibits the ability of a government to make decisions and act in the best interests and using their mandate to govern.

**Mr Colle:** But isn't part of the platform the Conservatives ran on — aren't they introducing a bill to make referenda more easily available to the citizens of Ontario? Are you in principle against referendum altogether or just in this case?

**Mr McAughey:** My personal view is that referendum should only be held on moral issues. I could not in good conscience allow, in this case, 130 people to set moral standards on this issue, which I believe is an issue of governance. I believe the government must be allowed to do that, to govern.

**1750**

**Mr Colle:** Moral issues: Give me an example of the kind of thing.

**Mr McAughey:** Capital punishment would definitely be one. Maybe distinct society, because people do find that a key definition of being Canadian. Those I would support. If a constitutional amendment were put forward for a distinct society, I would support a referendum on that issue.

**Mr Colle:** But in the case of local issues, you don't think it's appropriate.

**Mr McAughey:** From a provincial point of view, no, I don't see a precedent there. I don't think a precedent should be there. I repeat, the government should be allowed to govern, whether it be Conservative, Liberal or NDP. They do have that right.

**Mr Colle:** You referred to the Common Sense Revolution quite a bit. In the Common Sense Revolution — I don't know it phrase by phrase — there is a reference to referendum, more direct democracy. In essence, that part of the Common Sense Revolution you don't buy.

**Mr McAughey:** I was talking more about the major themes. Being a student, I don't have all that much time to leaf through all the propaganda or whatever from all parties. The major themes were less government, fewer politicians, less taxes. That's what I and most of the people I know voted upon.

**The Vice-Chair:** We've exceeded our time. Thank you very much, Mr McAughey, for coming here this evening.

#### CHRIS BARNES

**The Vice-Chair:** I call upon Chris Barnes, please. Good evening, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mr Chris Barnes:** I highly doubt I'll need 10 minutes. My name is Chris Barnes, and it's my pleasure to address this committee. I'd like to say, first off, that I am in favour of Bill 103 to amalgamate the seven municipalities into one city.

I'd like to first give you my own personal perspective. I'm a relatively new property owner. I currently live in the city of Etobicoke. I have to say, of all the cities fighting amalgamation, I think Etobicoke has the least right and certainly provides the greatest excuse for getting rid of seven municipal governments.

As a taxpayer, it's a little frustrating to find out that not only are my dollars being spent in strip bars to the tune of 80 grand, but to say you then spent an additional 80 grand to investigate the fraud and then decide to pay the guy a severance package of an additional 80 grand for the rest of his life — Brian Mulroney probably only wishes he had it so good. I'd like to thank Etobicoke city council for taking municipal politics to a whole new level of sleaze.

Personally, I don't care much about who provides what services for me. All I know is that I pay a pretty hefty

tax bill and I don't think I get that much in return. In fact, I've never voted in a municipal election. Perhaps I will now. All I hope is that whoever does get elected to the new Toronto council, I hope that they behave in a more credible manner than those who represent us there today.

I don't care much for the ideological battles regarding the amalgamation and the bill, left versus right — less of that nonsense. But as a taxpaying citizen, any time you reduce the number of politicians, that's a good thing. I think only the federal Liberals think the opposite.

As usual, those who oppose amalgamation the most are the ones who stand to lose the most. I suppose, in a year or so, there'll be a few ex-politicians who will have to give up their public offices and find some real work in the private sector.

Those who oppose the bill are mainly people who profit by the current system. If I were in their position, I probably would oppose it too. As a new member of Ontario's working class and someone who will be paying a long time for the financial mess created by my parents' generation, I won't accept the status quo. I firmly agree that the system is broken. It should be fixed and it should be fixed expediently. This means forget the royal commissions, the demands for more committees, yada, yada, yada. Just get it done. If we lose a few politicians along the way, you won't see me crying.

Those opposed to amalgamation also bring the argument that neighbourhoods and communities are going to disappear. I disagree. I'm pretty sure that on the day this legislation becomes official and the dust has settled, I'm going to drive home from work and it will still be there at 2285 Lakeshore Boulevard, the snow will be plowed, the garbage will be collected, and the tax man will still be coming.

Before I leave I have a couple of questions, a couple of issues I would like to clear up. I don't know if you have to answer them right away or wait until I finish. I just want to make sure I have clear in my own head that we are losing seven local governments and are replacing them with a single unified body; that we are reducing the number of politicians from 106 to 44, my favourite; that this will streamline Toronto and make running the city more efficient; that public services will still be maintained; and finally, that this plan will indeed save money.

I would like to issue one word of caution to the provincial government. I am arguing for amalgamation in good faith and I expect positive results. I also expect my municipal taxes to remain stable. There's a lot of support for the many initiatives you are undertaking. Please don't let us down and don't make a liar out of me.

In closing, I'd like to add to some words of encouragement. Even though these proceedings have seemingly been dominated by the opposition, even though it appears a referendum has been fixed against the government and the no campaign is wasting countless dollars on their plight, you can always take solace in one thing: The citizens for democracy, or whatever they're calling themselves, have seemingly placed their faith in Toronto's ex-mayor John Sewell. Perhaps we should remind the public that he got thrown out of office some 20 years ago for being a lousy politician then. I guess 20 years later not much has changed. Thank you very much.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Barnes, out of curiosity, what do you do for a living?

**Mr Barnes:** I'm an investor relations consultant.

**Mr Marchese:** Are you involved in your local community in Etobicoke?

**Mr Barnes:** I've participated in events. I've been out to stuff.

**Mr Marchese:** What kind of events?

**Mr Barnes:** We have local events down on the waterfront. I live on the waterfront.

**Mr Marchese:** Do you know what happens in the community in terms of problems that people might be having or —

**Mr Barnes:** The area I live in is going through quite a bit of change. It's where the motel strip is, which I understand is soon to be demolished. There is quite a mix of poorer people, I would say, in the area. It's not the best area to live, but things seem to be calm.

**Mr Marchese:** You said you don't really care much who provides services because you don't get very much anyway. Do you like the idea that we pay taxes for our health care system and for our social services and for our education system or do you think —

**Mr Barnes:** You're opening a whole new can of worms. Personally, I am in favour of a two-tier health care system.

**Mr Marchese:** So you don't much care about whether poor people have enough money to get enough from hospitals.

**Mr Barnes:** Under the current programs we have in place, our poor people are looked after. As far as I'm aware, poor people here in Ontario still receive more money from welfare and that kind of thing than the rest of —

**Mr Marchese:** So they're doing okay. You say those who oppose it stand to lose a lot. The people who have come here to oppose it — in addition to some politicians whom you hold in disdain, there have been a number of ordinary people. I don't know if you've had a chance to listen to —

**Mr Barnes:** I think I'm pretty much an ordinary guy.

**Mr Marchese:** Yes, but the other people who have come are ordinary guys too, ordinary people who don't have jobs to lose but are very worried about what's going to happen to their communities. Do you dismiss them as just being disciples of M. Sewell?

**Mr Barnes:** I don't think our communities are going anywhere. Mimico, which borders where I live, is still going to exist.

**Mr Marchese:** I realize you're going to drive back to your home and it's still going to be there unless a bomb comes down. There's a tax bomb coming down. You're going to get hit very soon, by the way; you should take cover. I know you don't like taxes, and you should take cover.

I'm a bit offended by your offending a lot of people who have come in front of this committee. It isn't just Mr Sewell, by the way, who disagrees with what's happening.

**Mr Barnes:** I think some of the people who have come before this committee haven't had any problem offending members of the government.

**Mr Marchese:** You don't like it when some people offend members of the government.

**Mr Barnes:** All I'm saying is it's nice to give a little bit back.

**Mr Marchese:** So you don't like politicians, for some reason?

**Mr Barnes:** No, I like responsible politicians.

**Mr Marchese:** So these 44 people who are going to be elected in this amalgamated city are going to be responsible and you hope that this government will make that happen.

**Mr Barnes:** I certainly do.

**Mr Marchese:** What gives you faith that somehow these 44 people are going to be any more responsible than the present ones you're getting rid of?

**Mr Barnes:** With the number of seats being reduced from 106 to 44, we'll have a larger number of politicians running and I expect the quality of the politician to be higher, especially when there's more at stake. I'd also like to say that I'm pretty pleased with the way the government's turned things around in this province.

**Mr Marchese:** This government here?

**Mr Barnes:** Yes, this government here.

**Mr Marchese:** You like what they're doing?

**Mr Barnes:** I certainly do.

**Mr Marchese:** I could tell.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Barnes. I'm sorry we have to close this off. We've reached the end of our time. We'll stand recessed until 7 pm.

*The committee recessed from 1804 to 1903.*

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call us to order. Yes?

**Mr John R. Baird (Nepean):** I believe there would be unanimous consent — I spoke to both other parties — to put a sub form in, myself for Mr Maves.

**The Vice-Chair:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Mr Bisson:** Madam Chair, there is if you allow me to sub in at this point.

**The Vice-Chair:** Do we have unanimous consent?

**Interjection:** Sure we have unanimous consent.

**The Vice-Chair:** All right. Thank you.

**Mr Baird:** Thank you. I appreciate it.

#### ANNEX RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** I would like to call upon our first presenter this evening, the Annex Residents' Association, represented by John Kerr. Mr Kerr, would you come forward?

**Mr John Kerr:** Where would you like me?

**The Vice-Chair:** Right there. Good evening, Mr Kerr, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Kerr:** Ladies and gentlemen, my name is John Kerr. I'm the chair of the Annex Residents' Association of Toronto. We are probably the oldest residents' association in Toronto, dating from the 1920s. Our boundaries are Avenue Road on the east to Bathurst Street on the west, from Bloor Street on the south to the CPR tracks on the north. Our residents number somewhere around 16,000 or 17,000 people.

In the first week of February, our association polled our paid-up membership, asking them whether they supported megacity, opposed megacity or were undecided. The results are that 254 households, of varying numbers,

opposed megacity, 19 households supported megacity and 60 were by that date undecided.

Tonight I'd like to try and explain several reasons why the downtown core in particular is so strongly opposed to megacity. First, everyone I know, even the few people who support megacity, are appalled at the arrogance of this government. I'm afraid that a government today must not only be convinced of its own rightness, but it must convince a substantial proportion of the population that what it plans to do is an intelligent move. This is the first case I know of where a government has introduced legislation before it has developed a plan. I have seen no studies recommending this step. The most recent studies, as you well know, the Golden and the Crombie reports, recommended something rather different. Where is the study that supports this approach?

What we see in the legislation is a broad sketch of a municipal structure and the appointment of a transition team to look after the details. But it's the details that bother most of us. Putting it simply, we don't know how it's going to work. But the government says: "Trust us. It will be just fine." The trouble is that the group empowered to set up the details doesn't have to talk to anybody or listen to anybody, nor will they have time to do that if they wanted to. What's the hurry? The justifications for this timetable that I have heard merely beg the question.

This government produced megacity like a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat: It was not what anybody expected. Nor do I think most people feel the government has a mandate to do it. In last Saturday's *Globe & Mail* Mr Gilchrist said that as early as May 1994 the Common Sense Revolution pledged this government to reduce the number of politicians and to reduce duplication at the municipal level as well as at the provincial level. I am sorry; the vast majority of citizens I know did not interpret that as a mandate to amalgamate all of Metro, particularly when the promised savings are, to put it gently, problematic.

Nobody in the government has tried to sell this idea; they just barged ahead saying, "You can have your referendum, but we won't pay any attention to the result." No wonder people are a little upset. The fact is that most people today feel they ought to have a say in what their government does. Most particularly, they feel they ought to have a say in how they are to be governed. This government has denied them this say, and in the creation of the transition team it has continued that process of exclusion.

The second area that has caused concern, particularly in the downtown core I think, is accessibility to our municipal government, what people today are calling "accountability." If we more than halve the number of elected representatives, it means we will probably have less than half the access to an elected representative we now have. When we have a problem or a concern, half the time, relative to now, we will have to go to a civil servant for an answer, and that civil servant will be found in a huge, and I do mean huge, municipal government.

We are afraid because a large bureaucracy is simply not as responsive as a small one; nor is a volunteer association such as mine, which seems to be part of the

plan somehow, as hard as we may try to be representative of our community, accountable to anyone. The cost of a ward councillor or two and his staff is very small potatoes in a huge municipal budget. Who said we should have 44 councillors? What study recommended that number? Where is the logic? Why 44? Why not 66 or 88? It makes just as much sense.

**1910**

The third area of concern involves the downloading that appears to many people to be the real reason driving megacity. Most of my neighbours see this downloading of social services as a many-headed monster. It will endanger the level of social services available. Combined with the AVA or MVA it will raise taxes and depress property values for property owners, raise rents for tenants and it could very well drive our small businesses out of our neighbourhoods. We find these dangers unacceptable.

The province's promise of a safety fund is not reassuring. What happens when that is gone? Again, what study suggested that social services should be paid for out of municipal real estate taxes? Where is the logic?

What suggestions can I offer? First, I suggest that this really important business of listening to people that is going on here tonight ought to be the beginning of the process and not the end. The government should drop the bill and start it over. It should develop a plan based on careful study and then bring forward legislation.

If that won't work, then I strongly endorse the suggestion made by Richard Gilbert in last Saturday's *Globe and Mail*, and before that at our neighbourhood forum, that the present councils be continued in office for one year and that an interim council be elected next November to do the work presently entrusted to the transition team. This would restore a large measure of democracy to the entire process, and I think it would slow the frenetic pace to something a little more reasonable.

Finally, if the government must pay for social services from real estate taxes, let that be a stable, province-wide real estate tax, supported in recessionary times by income tax, and please do not bankrupt our small businesses. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. I think you've effectively used up the time available. Thank you for coming here this evening.

MIKE CANZI

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Mike Canzi. Good evening, Mr Canzi, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Mike Canzi:** I'd like to begin by thanking the members of the committee for giving me the opportunity to speak on this issue. There are two issues relevant to Bill 103 that I'd like to address during my presentation. First and foremost are the differences in the political culture of urban and suburban areas and the reasons why the two are incompatible together. Second, I would like to address the notion that amalgamation will result in more efficient and less expensive government.

I've worked in market research for five years, and from personal experience from doing thousands of

interviews of people across the GTA, I can assure you there is a very definite difference between political culture downtown and in the outlying areas. But you don't need to have worked in market research to be able to see that for yourself. It's evident in the voting patterns within Metro specifically. For example, we'll see that in the city of Toronto fewer than one third of the MPPs are members of the governing party, whereas in Etobicoke four of four, in other words 100%, of the local MPPs are members of the Progressive Conservative Party.

I'm not suggesting that attitudes change at the Humber River or that they change when you cross Eglinton or St Clair Avenue, but on average there are different political cultures in the inner-city and in the outer suburban areas. To illustrate those differences, I'd like to focus on transportation and differing attitudes towards transportation.

The Metro transportation department does a survey every five years called Transportation Tomorrow — at least that's my understanding, it comes up every five years — and in 1991 the data in their report showed that households in Scarborough are more than twice as likely as households in Toronto to own or have access to an automobile. This difference is reflected in how Scarborough council votes and in how Toronto council votes.

For example, the city of Toronto has a cycling advisory committee and Scarborough doesn't. The city of Toronto has a relatively extensive network of on-street bike lanes; to the best of my knowledge, Scarborough has none. Another example, again on the topic of transportation but slightly different, grew out of the Bay Street urban clearway. What I'd like to do is read a couple of quotes from this book. It's the proceedings of a conference on bicycle issues held in Montreal in 1992. I'd like to read from the article written by Daniel Egan. He works for the planning department for the city of Toronto and this is his view of the history of implementing the urban clearway on Bay Street:

"The Metropolitan government...did not embrace the clearway concept. The Metro transportation department and many Metro councillors called the clearway proposal 'too extreme.' They predicted that it would divert traffic to other streets, resulting in downtown congestion, and would likely fail.... The metropolitan board of trade, representing business interests, expressed concern that it would reduce capacity for cars by two full lanes, while creating priority lanes for transit.... One of the strengths of the clearway proposal was that Bay Street was under city of Toronto jurisdiction. Over Metro's objections, Toronto city council approved the public works commissioner's report to implement the clearway...."

As to whether or not that was a positive outcome, further down in the article Egan writes that bicycle volume increased on Bay Street 173%; transit ridership increased 25%; transit vehicle travel time was reduced by 12%; the motor vehicle accident rate was reduced and motor vehicle travel time was reduced. It sounds like a positive outcome of a project that would not have been implemented if Toronto wasn't a separate entity at that point.

I trust that most of the committee members would agree that citizens should have that choice. They should have a choice to live in a city that reflects their values. I've spoken to countless people from Scarborough who

love Scarborough. They've chosen to live there because of the way it is. I choose to live in Toronto because of the way Toronto is. I think that competition, having choices, is a healthy thing. I think it's out of that that innovation springs and not having this monolithic, single government for everybody.

There's one other issue I'd like to address, and that is the reasons why amalgamation may not necessarily lead to less expensive and more efficient government. First of all, I don't buy the contention that there's a lot of duplication that needs to be weeded out. Three of the larger municipal employers would be police, transit and community services, or welfare, all three of which are already delivered at the Metro level. There's only one administration in each case. There aren't a lot of jobs that could be cut, I would guess.

**1920**

If, heaven forbid, we wind up with the megacity, we will have the same number of welfare cases the day after, so we'll need the same number of welfare case workers. We'll have the same crime rate, so we'll need the same number of police officers. I can't see that retrenchment, that getting rid of workers, is much of an option. For the employees who remain, I suspect they will be more highly paid than the ones we have now, and I base this just on my own observation, which is that the boards of directors of large corporations tend to be better paid than the boards of directors of small corporations, and the megacity would be a very large corporation.

I'd like to continue in a similar vein with an anecdote, a friend's experience with the bureaucracy at a large institution in the province of Ontario. This anecdote is just an anecdote; there are other anecdotes that would show the opposite, but this shows big bureaucracy as cumbersome and inefficient.

My friend was granted a small loan on an emergency basis by this institution, and within a month was able to write a cheque for the full amount and did so in front of an appropriate bureaucrat. Weeks passed and the cheque wasn't cashed, so my friend began a regular cycle of events, which was calling bureaucrats, telling them about the situation and getting the same response every time, which was, "I'll look into the matter and I'll phone you back." My friend never got a call back. The cheque was ultimately cashed, but to me this is indicative of how big bureaucracy can be. It's every bit as plausible, from my point of view, that big bureaucracy will cost us more money rather than save us money.

I understand that the members of the committee were less than enthusiastic about the idea of taking these hearings on the road to the various cities —

**Mr Bisson:** Government members were less than enthusiastic about it.

**Mr Canzi:** I understand that the government members of the committee were less than enthusiastic —

**Mr Baird:** Don't be spoon-fed.

**The Vice-Chair:** Continue.

**Mr Canzi:** Right — and that the concern was travel time. You were concerned about the time you'd have to spend getting from here or from wherever you are to these various cities, so I'm sure you would understand how unenthusiastic and how alienated the voters in

Etobicoke-Rexdale would feel, for example, if they had to travel all the way down to Wellington and John to take in a council meeting. I'm sure you can understand how inconvenient and how alienated the voters in High Park-Swansea or Rosedale would be if they had to go all the way up to Mel Lastman Square to apply for a building permit. I think that creating one municipal government for such a large city is going to inconvenience everybody.

**The Vice-Chair:** I have to ask you to make your concluding remarks. We've just about run out of time.

**Mr Canzi:** Okay. In closing and on a lighter note, this is directed just to members of the government party: If you truly believe the best way to reduce the cost of government is to merge together neighbouring jurisdictions, why haven't you initiated proceedings to merge the province of Ontario with the province of Quebec? If your logic is right, this would reduce duplication of services on a grand scale and save us tons of money.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here this evening.

#### NEIL GUTHRIE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Neil Guthrie. Good evening, Mr Guthrie, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Neil Guthrie:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm here as a concerned private citizen, and I'm prompted by my experience of two cities other than Toronto. First of all, I lived in Ottawa, which as you know is a city with a number of municipalities and an overarching regional government. This means that there's a city hall practically every 100 yards, and I left Ottawa with a tremendous sense of being overgoverned. On the other hand, I lived in England, and my conclusion there was that London is far too big a city to have a single government and that it was right to devolve power away from the Greater London Council to local governments and to take government closer to its citizens.

Metropolitan Toronto, I think, falls somewhere between these two poles in terms of size, and my conclusion therefore is that one level of government in the Metropolitan Toronto area should be eliminated.

Philosophically, I subscribe to the principle of subsidiarity, in other words the idea that government services should be delivered by the level of government closest to the people who are actually receiving them. In practical terms, planning and efficiency would seem to dictate consolidation at the Metro level, and I think this can be achieved without a loss of either democratic accountability or local identity. My remarks, therefore, will be focused on these three areas: first of all, duplication of services and efficiency; second, accountability; and third, identity.

In terms of duplication, I took a look this morning through the blue pages of the telephone book and I noted that Metro is responsible for some aspects at least of the following: parks, planning, roads, waste, water, housing, arts and culture plus supporting administration. The cities are responsible for parks, planning, roads, waste, water, housing, arts and culture plus administration as well. There is clearly overlap, clearly room for greater efficiency by consolidating services at a single level.

As a practical example, I'd like to look just briefly at the regulation of rollerblading. A couple of years ago municipal government decided that rollerblading should be regulated. One level of government decided that someone on rollerblades is a vehicle; another level of government at the municipal decided that a rollerblader is a pedestrian. The result of this is that the legality of the activity depends on whose road you are travelling along: If it's a Metro road, you have to be on the road itself; if it's a city road, on the sidewalk. Or it may be vice versa; I'm not sure which. The citizen has no idea, probably the police constable on the beat has no idea which road it is and therefore enforcement becomes impossible. This is, I admit, a somewhat trivial example, but it's indicative of the impracticalities, even the absurdities that arise from having two layers of government operating in essentially the same sphere of activity.

Second, with respect to accountability, for the same reason the citizen doesn't know whether he or she can rollerblade on the sidewalk or on the road, the citizen doesn't know who is responsible for government services in general. This leads to confusion, and as a result there are opportunities for buck-passing and/or duplication of effort. This results, in my view, in a loss of accountability democratically because responsibility is hard to determine, and when it is determined, it may be divided. One elected municipal representative would mean the buck would have to stop somewhere, and it would probably stop sooner.

Finally, with respect to local identity, in my view it's mistaken to suggest that amalgamation will mean a loss of community identity because identity doesn't come from government structures or bureaucracies, many of which are fairly recent and artificially created in any event, without deep roots in the communities at stake. Local identity comes from individuals, neighbourhoods, ratepayer groups like Mr Kerr's and from communities, and these of course will all survive municipal reorganization. One has only to look at municipalities that were amalgamated in Toronto in the past that have kept a strong sense of local identity: Leaside, North Toronto, Yorkville, Forest Hill, Swansea. But there are also many communities that have strong identities without ever having had formal government structures to underpin them; for example, the republic of Rathnelly, Little Italy, Rosedale, the Greek community along the Danforth or indeed the Annex.

In conclusion, in my view amalgamation represents an opportunity for greater efficiency, less overlap, less government, less bureaucracy, but also greater democratic accountability and no loss of local identity. The government's plan is perhaps not perfect, but reorganization of the municipal level of government is long overdue and represents a positive opportunity for the people of Metropolitan Toronto.

**1930**

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** Thank you very much for your presentation. I believe you were in the room for the previous presenter. I want to go back to the comment that a lot of the services are being provided by the upper-tier government now, so there will not be a great deal of savings in the amalgamation. Could you give me some

comments on why you think those services are at the upper tier, why it was decided in the last number of years that policing should be an upper-tier service to cover a broader area?

**Mr Guthrie:** With something like policing, the problem of having, for example, a Forest Hill police force, as there was in the old days, was that once you reached the boundary of Forest Hill, the cops had to stop their vehicles and call the next-door force. That's clearly inefficient. The decision, I presume, was that the Metro government could deal with that sort of problem more efficiently. To the extent that there are remaining areas of overlap, I think it would make sense to continue the process.

**Mr Hardeman:** So it's fair to say that you would agree that doing the same with the fire service as was done with the police service in the past would be —

**Mr Guthrie:** Absolutely.

**Mr Hardeman:** On the same basis, looking at services that one would suggest should not be on the broader basis, where no savings could be achieved, could you give me in your opinion what type of services they would be?

**Mr Guthrie:** I'm not sure I'm really qualified to answer the question. I suppose it's entirely possible to make some arrangement whereby more locally based services could be provided that way. I don't think you have to do everything in one great swoop.

**Mr Hardeman:** Another presenter, in fact quite a number of presenters, commented about Toronto being picked by Fortune magazine as the greatest city in the world to live. One of the presenters earlier this afternoon asked, what was that referring to, to Toronto proper or to Metro Toronto?

**Mr Guthrie:** My reaction to that is to assume that when people say where they live, they say Toronto, even though it might actually be East York or the city of York because, frankly, no one from Fortune is going to have heard of East York in the first place, and second, because people do think in terms of a larger unit. I assume Fortune meant the whole package rather than some tiny portion of it. That just makes sense.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for joining us this evening.

#### COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon the mayor's Committee on the Status of Women, represented by Pam McConnell. Good evening, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Pam McConnell:** My name is Councillor Pam McConnell. I'm the chair of the Committee on the Status of Women for the city of Toronto. On my left is my co-chair, Margaret Jackson. Behind us — we didn't have place at the table — is an important member of my committee, Lisa Cupoli. Jacintha Johnson is on my right. Also with us are staff who have helped facilitate our committee for quite a long time, Margaret Bryce and Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, behind me.

Thank you for hearing our deputation today. As you know, I'm sure, the Committee on the Status of Women is a volunteer committee which advises the city of

Toronto council on issues affecting women. The committee holds regular public meetings and we actively seek support and input from women about how municipal services are delivered. We would also seek the involvement of women when we advise on policy. Our submission today arises from the public consultations we have had from women.

The Committee on the Status of Women in the city of Toronto believes that the provisions of Bill 103 will have a detrimental effect on our women. Because of this concern, our committee joined with a number of women's organizations, such as the Older Women's Network and Women Plan Toronto, to develop a statement of the effects of this bill on women and on women's issues.

A week ago, you may have heard that 300 women came together at the city hall at the city of Toronto to sign that declaration. Speakers included Nancy Pocock, Margaret Campbell, Adrienne Clarkson, Linda Torney, Joan Grant Cummins, June Callwood, Kay McPherson, Ursula Franklin, Sarah Latha-Elliott, Eugenia Pearson, Catherine Olsen, and many other women of distinction from our city. Gale Garnett hosted the event, and women such as Moira Dunphy entertained us. Women political representatives from all levels and, I might add, all political stripes added their signatures to the declaration. To date, more than 800 women have signed this declaration, which will be presented to the House, that petition, by several of your women MPPs.

Margaret, perhaps you could read the declaration for the committee, please.

**Ms Margaret Jackson:** Women's declaration against amalgamation and for local democracy:

"We, the undersigned women from all of Metro Toronto, demand that the Ontario government:

"(1) cease all proceedings on Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, and recall its trustees;

"(2) Withdraw all proposals to download costs of welfare, health and assisted housing:

"Because women work to create services that benefit our community, such as child care, recreation centres, settlement houses, health and safety programs and good public education;

"Because we believe our communities are better when people care for those in need regardless of their place of origin; and that all residents of Ontario should share this responsibility of care;

"Because women as a group are more dependent on community and social services, it is women who will suffer most from their loss;

"Because the added financial burden on municipalities will jeopardize existing and future services which women need: housing for low-income people; long-term care for the elderly; child care; public health services; environmental sustainability projects; projects to prevent violence; safe, affordable, convenient and dependable transit; employment equity programs; public education for the diverse needs of our community; urban design and planning policies which make our communities safer and more liveable;

"Because local community institutions foster the participation and leadership of women in government;

"Because women fought for the right to vote and make decisions about our lives;

"Because there is no equality when others make important decisions for us.

"We therefore urge all women to:

- "(1) Oppose this amalgamation;
- "(2) Sign this declaration;
- "(3) Vote no in local referendums."

**Ms McConnell:** We have many of those signatures here.

The bill proposes to amalgamate the six cities and borough into one city. When the administrations are merged, there will be an understandable and justifiable pressure to provide the same sort of service across the metropolitan area.

These are some of our financial impact concerns:

We are concerned that the current level of community and health services, which are important to our women, will be cut in order to maintain other services such as garbage collection and fire protection. We believe that if this occurs, it will have a devastating impact on women employees who provide the community and health services and on the recipients of these very services.

Women use many services: child care so that we can work when we are young, free neighbourhood recreation programs, free public libraries, and free public health services; and when we are older, we get help in our homes and with our shopping, allowing us to remain independent. We do not want to save money by eliminating these services.

The government is also planning to give local governments the responsibility for funding some of these very expensive services. If the cost of these services is added to the property tax, there will be additional pressure to reduce services to save money.

We hear that the reason for this massive change is that it will save money. We would also like to save money but we do not like false economies and short-term gains which bring long-term pain.

#### 1940

Our right to make our own decisions: We oppose the vesting of power in the hands of the appointed trustees and transitional teams. In 1994 the people of Toronto voted for the members of their local councils partly on the basis of their support for social issues and community programs. In 1995 we voted for our provincial representatives. Now we are being told that this second election gave a valid mandate but the first one did not. We are being told that it is all right for the elected provincial government to supersede the authority of our elected municipal governments and appoint people who are not accountable to the electors to make decisions instead of them.

The programs we want: The women in the city of Toronto have worked very hard to get a number of innovative programs which respond to our particular needs. We worked with city council to implement a pay equity program for child care centres to increase the salaries paid to employees. Most of the staff we are referring to are women. Second, a number of women's groups receive grants to provide services to women and to increase the participation of women in the democratic process. Third, the people of Toronto support the devel-

opment of theatre, music and other arts organizations with several million dollars in grants. Fourth, more than 60% of the seniors in the city of Toronto are women, and ours is the only municipality with a committee to advocate for seniors and to advise on issues which affect our older people.

The other municipalities have committees which deal with safety issues but none has the broad range of programs offered in the city of Toronto. Our Breaking the Cycle of Violence grants program, with an annual budget of nearly \$500,000, has made public safety and women's safety a central part of the operating systems of other programs.

Agencies such as Sistering in the west end, which deals with homeless and socially isolated women, or 519 Church Street, a community centre downtown, which is developing a victim assistance program for lesbians and gay men, are making an important contribution to reducing conflict and crime in our city. Will there be a will to replicate and expand this grant program in such a new megacity?

The city of Toronto also has a number of programs to improve services and access to services for people with disabilities and for multicultural access. That's why the ramping of sidewalks and improved access to buildings and services have become important programs again in our city. Will this be expanded to this new city?

The alternative housing subcommittee advises on policy and advocates for services for the homeless and for people who have difficulty finding housing. We worked with it to establish a survival fund of \$5.75 million. It helps agencies respond to your provincial cuts in services and income support by developing or enhancing programs which provide food or shelter for people affected by your cuts. Will this be expanded to our new city?

Residents of Toronto, and indeed from other areas, are excited by the progress we have made towards cleaning up the Don River. Citizens have organized the creation of the Chester Springs Marsh and the building of a stairway from the Queen Street bridge, and more and more people have access to the Don Valley and the beautiful cycling and walking trails. This was developed with the advice and involvement of our residents.

As you can see, our small local government has responded to the needs of our women and our men and has cooperated with residents' organizations and with community agencies.

With regard to the homes for the aged, 10 homes for the aged are operated by Metro Toronto. With more than 2,500 residents and 3,000 staff, it is the largest long-term care system in Canada. Most of the staff and most of the residents are women. Many of the staff are members of a racial minority group.

Metro provides 20% of the budget for the homes for the aged. In 1996 some members of Metro council attempted to contract out the management of one or more of those Metro homes for the aged. These councillors felt they could reduce or eliminate Metro's contribution to the budget. We are concerned that the board of trustees may wish to reduce the budget for homes for the aged and that

the transition team may wish to privatize those homes. The Committee on the Status of Women is opposed to the lowering of standards and services provided in homes for the aged and we are just as opposed to the privatization of that long-term care.

**A voice for women:** Women have been the leaders in developing and providing services in our neighbourhoods. Women have used these local institutions to gain experience with the democratic process and with lobbying local governments on issues of importance to us.

The government of Ontario would like to increase the size of the council of the city of Toronto from 17 members to 44 members. It will be considerably harder for our community groups to lobby a larger council and achieve favourable decisions on issues of importance to our women.

Historically, many women who have been active in federal and provincial politics in Canada began their electoral careers in local government, women such as Dianne Cunningham, Marilyn Mushinski, Lyn McLeod, Elinor Caplan, Marilyn Churley and Sheila Copps. Women are able to succeed at local levels with less money, fewer high-powered connections and less strain on their families. We are concerned that political success in the massive new city will require the approval of a political party and enormous expenditure of funds, which women do not have. This will effectively shut out women from elected office.

Our most important point always is equity, and the city of Toronto has a history of promoting equity and fairness. The Committee on the Status of Women is concerned that many programs will be lost in the new structure. Some of these are programs to change attitudes and combat violence against racial minorities and gay-bashing; programs to improve the self-esteem of young people who are gay and lesbian; programs to reduce domestic violence and elder abuse; free self-defence courses; pay equity and employment programs; human rights training; and programs to improve access to our city services.

These are all programs which help to create the civil society we have in Toronto. We want these programs to continue. In fact we want those programs to improve. We want Toronto to continue to be the best city in the world. To continue to be the best means that we must have a governance infrastructure which accommodates and encourages citizen participation and accountability to the electorate. We must have a decision-making process which involves the people whose lives are affected by these decisions. We must have requirements in our legislation that they be consulted on the levels of municipal service delivery, including equity and accessibility.

We want Toronto to be the best city in the world for many years to come, and we will not settle for the lowest and the worst.

I think you've heard lots of words today. I'm sure you know that one picture is worth a thousand words. We have a picture we would like to show you that we think embeds the work of our committee and our thoughts on this matter.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here this evening. You have exhausted the time available.

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**CANADIAN PENSIONERS CONCERNED,  
ONTARIO DIVISION**

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on the Canadian Pensioners Concerned, Mae Harman. Good evening, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Mae Harman:** Thank you for the opportunity to present this evening. My name is Mae Harman, and I'm president of the Ontario division of Canadian Pensioners Concerned. We are a national voluntary organization of seniors who advocate on issues of concern to seniors and all generations, including things like pensions, health care, transportation and housing. We are determined to work to preserve the good community and a social safety net for all.

For 12 years I lived in a border city and was very glad when I was able to retire and return to Toronto, which is the city I love. When we went over the border it was with a certain amount of nervousness. We made sure the car doors were locked, kept to the main streets and went directly to our planned destination or passed through the city as quickly as possible for the suburbs, where most of the people and the shops had flown from the inner-city ghetto.

Back and forth on the train to Toronto I met many Americans who talked with great enthusiasm about their visits to Toronto: clean and safe and full of wondrous cultural events, entertainment and interesting ethnic food which could be enjoyed by their whole family. We certainly don't want Toronto to become a burnt-out relic of its history, its tree-lined streets and attractive homes, its comfortableness and colour, its life and liveliness, as many of the large American cities have become: burnt-out ghettos.

Big is not always better. There has been no careful analysis of what the megacity would offer that would be better for the people, more effective, more efficient, more cost-effective. Why is the Ontario government so intent on changing its greatest asset into a monster? What is the big hurry? Why is it disregarding the advice of David Crombie and others who were appointed to study the question?

While we've all been engaged in this shouting match, there has been no attempt to involve the people in a calm discussion of what we could do to make our communities serve the people better and coordinate our efforts in a more efficient and effective manner. Instead the government has said: "Go ahead and have your referenda and your hearings, but we will not listen. We have our agenda and we will proceed with it no matter what you think." No wonder the community protest has been noisy.

Some of our services are already coordinated on the Metro level and more could be phased in gradually, following a carefully thought-out plan and involving the elected representatives of the people in the various communities. A megacity will make it much more difficult for the ordinary citizen to access his representative and get a hearing.

Candidates for councillor will have to have the support of a great deal of money and be indebted to these money contributors, and also have political affiliations, which

will influence his or her behaviour. Instead of civic-minded candidates, we will have our affairs run by political machines reminiscent of old Chicago and New York. The megacity and its mayor will wield a great deal of power, perhaps more than the Premier of the province.

Faced with the downloading of so many services on to the municipalities, taxes will rise in order to provide services, and the costs of administration and accounting will also rise. This will force many residents and businesses to move out. At the same time, user fees will increase for many of the services now provided. Any income tax rebate, except for the very rich, will be eaten up by increased taxes and costs.

Seniors who find their fixed income spiralling ever downwards are especially worried about the threat of increased assessments and taxes; the loss of services which municipalities will no longer be able to provide; increased user fees; privatization of old-age homes; lack of subsidized housing; lack of transportation; inadequate home care; the curtailment of services from community agencies which previously received municipal grants; the loss of the Toronto Mayor's Committee on Aging, free sidewalk snowplowing, property tax grants, public library programs etc. It's a bleak outlook.

As I came out the other morning and saw the Toronto works department sprinkling salt on my outer sidewalk I thought, "Well, this is the last year."

The disabled will also suffer as disability is more narrowly defined and they are moved over from family benefits to something called Ontario Works, whatever that is. I talked with a young woman in a wheelchair today who says she's now lost her family benefits worker — she's not sure whether she'll get her cheque this month — and she's been told that she will be reclassified as employable. She's already lost her home care worker, so she has to clean her apartment from her wheelchair.

Olivia Chow in her presentation to these hearings described well how the quality of life of a senior woman in subsidized housing will deteriorate as equipment like elevators and refrigerators go out of service and there's no money to repair or replace.

One of the greatest concerns seniors have is for long-term care. For the last 10 to 12 years, consumers, volunteers, health care providers, professional groups and academics have worked with the different governments on reform of long-term care. The objective was to make it possible for people to remain longer in their own homes by bringing care to them.

Long-term care was seen as one part of a seamless continuum of care from home to hospital to institution. Some of us thought that home and community care, responsive and responsible to the local community, was at last within our grasp as we began planning multi-service agencies in our communities.

The Harris government trashed these and replaced them with six community care access centres for Metropolitan Toronto. The access centres are under the long-term-care division of the provincial Ministry of Health. They're set up within the boundaries of the present municipalities, which are now to pass into the great beyond.

The CCAC boards have been appointed and are working on their bylaws, hiring CEOs and acquiring

headquarters. Now the municipalities are to assume responsibility for long-term care and 50% of the cost. What is going to happen to the money that was to be saved by downsizing hospitals and transferred to long-term care? How will long-term care now be part of a continuum of services when it is the responsibility of the municipalities and other services for health are provincial? How can property taxpayers possibly absorb the cost of home care in the face of the closing of hospitals, the shortening of length of stay as people are sent home sicker and quicker than ever before, and a growing senior population?

We are worried that the CCACs may also be trashed just as they are getting organized and home care will be in complete turmoil. There are many complaints now as to the adequacy of its coverage and we cannot afford to embark on yet another experiment in delivery.

It is the duty of government to serve all of the electorate, providing standards, rules, services and protections for all the people, according to their wishes. It is not the role of government to make decisions without consultation and without carefully thought-out plans of action which are in the best interests of all the people.

What machine is driving this big rush to make such drastic changes to our governance? If you have a detailed, thought-out plan, why is it such a secret? What evidence do you have that your megacity will save money and provide efficient services?

Studies of other jurisdictions point to high implementation costs, increased costs of bureaucracy and increased taxes. In Halifax-Dartmouth, what started out as a \$7-million amalgamation plan has now topped the \$30-million mark. Larger government means larger systems, more staff, slower response time and less regard to the needs of citizens. We don't want your megacity.

You have heard all this many times before, passionately and eloquently, especially by the committee which just preceded me. You must know that many people are very angry about what you're setting out to do and how you're going about it, and you must know that many people are very frightened. One can only pray that your government will use some real common sense.

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**Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt):** I really appreciate your presentation. I think we've determined what's driving the big rush, and that is the government is determined to offload on to municipalities an enormous amount of cost, including the ones you talked about here in terms of long-term care, social assistance and social housing for seniors. That's our conclusion. We saw sort of the other shoe drop shortly after the megacity was announced. Then the other hammer hit of downloading.

Does your organization share that view, that this is perhaps what's driving this, an urge to download on to the property taxpayers many of the services you talk about in your proposal?

**Ms Harman:** Yes, we see this as a way of supposedly saving money to provide for an income tax drop.

**Mr Phillips:** What's the feeling of seniors about, as you put it in here — the income tax cut scheme will benefit the rich, but for seniors it will be eaten up with increased taxes, property taxes, service costs and user fees.

**Ms Harman:** There are few rich seniors and very many of us, if we're not below the poverty line, are very close to the poverty line and we're getting closer.

**Mr Phillips:** I can appreciate it. I'm glad you commented on the group before. I personally am totally convinced that we have created the best urban environment in North America because the city of Toronto councils over the years have been, in my opinion, very progressive. I've always said that. I'm also convinced personally that if we eliminate the city of Toronto and have one mega-council, many of the programs this group talked about, these sorts of programs, if we had had one mega-council, would not have existed, and I think over time they will dry up. That's my view. Does the pensioners' group share that concern?

**Ms Harman:** We do indeed.

**Mr Phillips:** What would you think would be the impact on seniors if we moved to the megacity and you had to deal with a council of 44 individuals and fight to get on that agenda? What about creative programs that you've seen in the past for seniors? Would you see them slowly disappearing?

**Ms Harman:** Yes.

**Mr Phillips:** Are seniors you represent significantly concerned about that?

**Ms Harman:** We are. I know my local councillor. I met him coming out of the liquor store the other day.

**Mr Phillips:** Don't mention names.

**Ms Harman:** He was very helpful to my neighbours and all of us in terms of cutting down some plans for housing that were occurring in our neighbourhood, and we know we can go to him if we want help.

**Mr Phillips:** I think the problem we run into here is that for those who haven't really experienced how this Metro area works, they simply assume, "They just put it all together, one big council, and it will keep functioning like it has in the past."

**Ms Harman:** Our friend with the bicycle information a while ago indicates that each community has its own special interests and culture, as he called it, and I think we would lose all that if we moved into one big thing.

**Mr Phillips:** Have you seen any evidence there are cost savings by amalgamating?

**Ms Harman:** No.

**Mr Phillips:** We've asked the government for all the studies. I do not believe there is one study that recommends what they're doing. I don't think they can find one. They instructed Peat Marwick to come up with the answer Peat Marwick came up with it, but I don't think there's been one study anywhere, any time in the history that recommends the amalgamation, including, I might add, Al Leach, Derwyn Shea and Morley Kells. They all signed a report saying: "Don't amalgamate. Beware of false savings of amalgamations."

**The Vice-Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Phillips, we've run out of time. Thank you very much, Ms Harman, for appearing here tonight.

JOHN ADAMS

**The Vice-Chair:** Could I have John Adams, please. Good evening, Mr Adams, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr John Adams:** I'm actually going to try and put a bit of a framework around this and provide some new information to the committee. Also, I'm going to use a little audio-visual support, so at one point we are going to turn to the TV monitor.

John Sewell, a person who knows me well, once wrote an article in a local newspaper describing John Adams as a fiscal conservative from the Annex. He meant it as a criticism; I took it as a compliment and put it in my election brochure last time around. I approach this submission also as a former budget chief of the city of Toronto. I'm like the specialist you've hired from the mergers and acquisitions department of your favourite financial services organization to do the due diligence review.

Is this a good deal for the municipal taxpayers? Is this a good deal for citizens? There are the two dimensions. Government can be more businesslike, but government is about more than business; it's about democracy as well. This is my attempt to develop a due diligence review of what is a mega-corporate merger.

In my first job out of school I was a reporter with the *Globe and Mail*, and when you open the *Globe* tomorrow morning and you turn to the editorial page, which I know you do from time to time, at the top of the masthead there's a quote from Junius, and it says, "The subject who is truly loyal to the chief magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures." This is in part about democracy and it's in part about what's best for the taxpayers.

I want to show you what I consider to be a shocking news clip from the CBC last week. It's about 25 or 30 seconds, and thanks to the modern miracle of the legislative broadcasting service we can see it on the video monitor, if they get my verbal cue. This is from CBC television news, at a public meeting last week.

*Audio-visual presentation.*

**Mr Adams:** I want to tell you something. I think it was a low blow for Councillor Tom Jakobek in a public meeting to refer to Premier Harris as a dictator for four years. I know Mike Harris and I don't believe he thinks he is a dictator for the next four years. When you have allies on this cause such as Tom Jakobek walking around town saying it's a four-year dictatorship under the Harris government, you don't need adversaries.

You're going to be hearing from Councillor Jakobek tomorrow morning.

**Mr David Turnbull (York Mills):** We've got some allies walking around saying the same thing.

**Mr Adams:** It's my 10 minutes.

*Interjections.*

**The Vice-Chair:** Excuse me. Order.

**Mr Adams:** I'll point out that the last time I was in this very room was 1993. David, we were making common cause in trying to persuade the NDP government which had introduced a government bill to impose market value assessment on every property taxpayer across Metro to give it sober second thought. They listened to the public and that bill didn't get third reading. All right, David? So we did make common cause on that one.

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The other thing I want to say is that I believe, in terms of democracy, that Leslie Frost got it right in 1953. There

are some lessons that a Conservative administration can learn from what was done right in 1953 by Premier Frost; that is, the election was held in 1953 to invent the brand-new thing, two-tier regional and local government, never been tried before on planet Earth. He got it right, and it was not appointed trustees and it was not an appointed transition team; all those important startup decisions were made by the newly elected councillors. That's my second point on the democracy front.

The other thing is turning to the money. You'll remember this brochure. The speaker found a *prima facie* case that Mr Leach was in contempt of the Legislature because four words were missing: "subject to legislative approval." Well, there's something else that's wrong with this brochure, and I want to put the lie to the numbers here tonight.

This is a pie chart that says "72% of Metro services are already consolidated." In the handouts you've seen tonight, and I just finished my research today, that's an absolute misrepresentation of the facts. You've forgotten that this is the night the lights went out at Queen's Park. You forgot about the largest and most important local service: the local hydro-electric utilities. It's \$1.9 billion based upon the 1995 fiscal statements.

They aren't included in the bureaucrats' financial information report, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, but I have to tell you this on this handout: The so-called 72% Metro consolidated services versus only 28% at the local level, when you add in the biggest single function of local government, the supply of electrical power for your lights, industries, businesses, shops and computers, the numbers change to 54% on the Metro side and 46%.

That's a lot closer to a wash than the downloading scenario the government has proposed with the transfer of welfare and social services and public housing to the municipalities. If you want to question it, if you want to look, these are the annual reports, audited, for the six local electrical utilities: York, East York, Scarborough, North York, Toronto, Etobicoke.

I can go over that. It adds up and you left it out of the equation and you're misleading people. It's not accurate. Let's come clean. Let's get it straight. I am the due diligence review. I am kicking the tires of the product that is being offered for sale here, and I've got to tell you, this vehicle's got flat tires.

The other thing I want to say is that I think it's a mega-mistake to the taxpayers, that a larger organization will lose economies of scale, not deliver them, and that there will be an added administrative burden to the taxpayers of one megacity.

I'll agree with Mike Harris before he was Premier when he was reported in the *Fergus News Express* saying, "Harris was asked if he's in favour of amalgamation and he responded: 'There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride? I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities.'" I agree with Mike Harris's comment there, and Toronto is one of those larger communities.

**Mr Bisson:** That was then, this is now.

**Mr Adams:** That was September 28, 1994. You've heard about that one.

**Mr Turnbull:** Who said that?

**Mr Adams:** A fellow named Mike Harris.

I was delighted to see that Premier Harris came to this committee this afternoon and took part in the listening process. That's really important, and I think there's some more listening going on across Metropolitan Toronto tonight at a series of meetings, some of them organized by the PC party, some of them organized by others. It's really important. I hope people will listen carefully.

I hope you have learned something new, and I hope you will get it right. By the way, for those MPPs who are from out of town, I know you have a second residence here in town so you're eligible to vote and so I encourage you to take part in the legal referendum under the legislation you gave royal assent to in December 1996.

I'd be delighted to respond to any questions.

**Mr Bisson:** I agree with you on the comment you made at the beginning, that this government is more about business, but it's about a democracy and delivering services. Although we might be on different sides of the political spectrum, I think we can agree on that.

I guess I've got to ask you the political question. I take it your party affiliation goes without explanation. How do you feel as a long-time Tory seeing this kind of stuff going on that's quite contrary to what supposedly you believe in as a party?

**Mr Adams:** You're absolutely right. Not only have I had a political job working for the Minister of Community and Social Services here at the Park, 1977 to 1981, but I was an unsuccessful Tory candidate in the 1981 provincial election in the NDP stronghold of Scarborough West, and I have been a municipal councillor in the city of Toronto for the last five years.

I come before you to say that I was six years old in 1953, so I didn't know that at the time. I had to learn about Leslie Frost and what he did in inventing two-tier metropolitan government, and I think he got it right. I hope I've caused some people to ask some questions and open their minds tonight.

**Mr Bisson:** But to answer the question, how do you feel as a long-time Tory seeing this kind of stuff going on by your own party?

**Mr Adams:** I think my button here says it all.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Adams.

**Mr Adams:** Oh, and be nice, clear your ice. It's particularly slippery out there.

### BRIJ BALI

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Brij Bali, please. Good evening, Mr Bali. Welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Brij Bali:** Madam Chairperson, dear esteemed committee members, thank you very much for this opportunity to express my personal views on the proposed amalgamation leading to a megacity.

I should begin by adding that a few months ago, when the whole process leading to the proposed megacity was coming up, my son, who's in grade 9 in East York, did a project on it and I helped him a lot in doing some

research. That's kind of opened up my eyes in terms of what really was going on and why things were happening the way they were being proposed.

My name is Brij Bali. I'm a resident of the borough of East York and I hold a bachelor of commerce and an MBA degree. Presently I'm an information technology student at the Information Technology Institute in Toronto. So you can say I'm employed as a student.

There have been various studies on this subject. My views and my son's views are categorized as follows.

We're looking at three major categories. One is city management. There is the practical state of city management and administration that needs to be addressed. Our goal is to ensure that efficient services are provided to our community. The duplication of roles and extensive bureaucracy that result from the present system can only be addressed based on a singular management methodology. Members of the community need to conform to one set of guidelines and not have to be treated differently if they step from one municipality to another, whether for personal or business reasons. I have personal experience, having been in business a few years ago.

The question is basically put as: Are we better off in general by having many administrations or are we better off by having an aggregate body to administer us? Are we better off having pieces in different parts of our geography or are we better to put them together? The answer will obviously reflect the realities of today and the future, with the past being our yardstick.

A unified system of deliverance has fewer rules or bylaws. It can address the specific needs of our communities. It avoids overlapping of responsibilities and enables us to have one voice in Canada and globally, basically giving us a strategic advantage in positioning ourselves to address the next century. I have seen Toronto losing a lot of opportunities and I am very sad for that. I believe Toronto has all the potential to address itself to all these global challenges.

The second item is synergy. This word will help me to define this marriage. Individually, as municipalities, we were homogeneous in our day-to-day functions. By establishing this matrimonial relationship, we are pooling together our resources and investing our attention towards gaining synergy. That's why we establish matrimonial relationships among ourselves. It is obvious that maintaining us in the status quo will serve to alienate us from addressing and achieving together the benefits of synergy. Rejecting to improvise and stabilize and stimulate our present system will in my opinion serve to disillusion our vision of being the best of the best.

The third part is transparency. Different systems evolve around different cultures. Do we want to see this? Our own homes have distinct cultures. Our businesses have their own cultures. There is little sense in having different municipality cultures within a five-mile radius. We want to attract investment into Ontario, and Toronto will be the guiding light of Ontario. If we want to create Ontario into a wealth machine, we want to develop this unified base.

All this enables us to have realistic benchmarks to develop the city based on transparent and common parameters. Today we have a helicopter view of our six individual cities. In order to create efficiency and trans-

parency, we need to get down into this forest and ensure that all the trees are taken care of. Our unified city will ensure that we address our priorities in a coherent manner.

That's my short presentation. Thank you very much for taking the time to listen to my presentation.

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**Mr Hardeman:** Thank you very much for your presentation. I just wanted to go back to what a lot of presenters have been bringing forward to the committee: their concern about local identities as they relate to regional identities. It seems that when a lot of presenters, when they come forward, one overlays the other. In fact the things they appreciate about their local municipality and their local government are driven by the regional or the Metro-type services. Do you see any reason why they should be different, why you need both levels of services? If you were going to have the two levels of services, which are important to be at a more local level and which ones should be Metro-wide?

**Mr Bali:** To me, two levels of services is where the confusion starts, where the duplication starts and essentially where we need to create some synergy and some effort into aligning ourselves in a focused manner.

I have been in business. I've run my own business at one time and I have seen myself crossing over from one municipality to another doing business across Metro Toronto. It disappoints me a little bit to hear complaints in every direction, and myself facing some of those constraints. However, to me, one system across the entire Metro range is ideal and I think the time has come to get married together.

Forget this debate. I'm tired of looking at television and listening to the East York council debating very trivial issues that can be handled by independent committees or volunteer committees at the community level. We do agree that communities are distinct and can handle their own affairs. On the basis of a unified city, we can definitely look forward to our own individual, independent volunteer committees addressing those priorities.

**Mr Hardeman:** The other issue that comes up regularly is that presently the different cities have different levels of services and there's a lot of concern expressed that because you would put it in a unified city it would automatically tend to take the services to a different level; that the new people elected would not be prone to providing the level of service that is presently being provided in individual municipalities. Do you see any reason why we would work on the assumption that if you were electing representatives to a unicity, they would not be the representatives who presently serve on the local councils? Would you see a reason why the present mayor of Toronto could not be elected as the mayor of the new supercity?

**Mr Bali:** I don't see any reason. I think the process itself will be very transparent and there will be enough campaigning to take care of that. We'll choose the best of the best.

In terms of services that are existent today, I am very much of the opinion that services could be provided from a unified base and provided better. I don't see much sense in having carnivals going on in different parts of

Metropolitan Toronto, as if one part of Metro is competing with the other part. Is it better to go to North York rather than to East York for a carnival? It's not a question of having more resources in North York and not having enough in East York, in a borough, or in Etobicoke, but I believe that at a unified level we can standardize the services to meet the needs of different communities, because it is the communities that bring up these events. Let us base these events and these services on the needs of the particular communities, based on their cultures, based on their background and their particular status in the community.

**Mr Hardeman:** Last but not least, I was involved in another area. They did a study in the downtown area of a city and they interviewed the people on the street and asked them about local government. It turns out that better than 80% of the people asked on the street did not know they had a two-tier system of local government. Would you assume that would be any different in Toronto or any of the cities in Toronto?

**Mr Bali:** Can you repeat the question, the last part, please?

**Mr Hardeman:** In a survey they did on the street over an extensive period of time, better than 80% of the people did not know they had two levels of local government. Maybe this would be the wrong time to do it — obviously this issue is on everyone's minds presently — but prior to this, would you say that would be different in Toronto? Do you think people in Toronto and the other cities of Metro have a different view of local government and are more involved with it than they are in other major centres?

**Mr Bali:** I think definitely yes. Definitely there will be more awareness of the commonality and the uniformity of services that are being provided. There'll be one provider and I think that provider will be the recognized agency. I think the confusion today stems from the fact that there are too many providers and one doesn't know whether it's two providers or it's five providers.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Bali, for appearing here this evening. We've run out of time.

#### JAMES ALCOCK

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on James Alcock, please. Good evening, Mr Alcock. Welcome to the standing committee. Could I ask you to introduce yourselves?

**Mr James Alcock:** I'm James Alcock and this is my colleague Bruce Bryer. Good evening and thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak before this committee.

My name is James Alcock and I'm a transportation planning consultant with a degree in urban planning from the University of Toronto. I live in the eastern Beaches, in the vicinity of Victoria Park Avenue and Kingston Road. I'm not connected to any political party or group; I'm just a private citizen who's expressing an opinion on this crucial issue. Mr Bryer is my colleague in transportation.

I highly endorse Bill 103, as amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto is a very necessary step in the evolution of this city. It was first proposed in 1953 and was pushed

by the then city of Toronto. However, opposition from the other municipalities stopped it. The efforts of Frederick G. Gardiner, Metro's first chairman, brought about a compromise, which is the Metro federation that we have today. It worked well throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and even partial amalgamation took place in 1966 when seven of Metro's then 13 boroughs were merged. They have since survived as distinct neighbourhoods such as Leaside, Forest Hill and Weston. Visionary planning with Metro-wide policies existed at that time.

However, in 1969, a group called the urban reformers came to power and that's when things started to go drastically wrong with the system. Planning and politics became parochial and small-minded. This situation has escalated in the last 20 years to the disastrous point we are at now.

If a person lives on the east side of Victoria Park Avenue, right by where I live, in Scarborough, on a municipal boundary line, and a fire or ambulance station exists on the west side, as it does, in Toronto, then a person living on the east side cannot be served by those stations because they exist in another municipality. A potentially dangerous situation is created due to the existence of a boundary line. Visionary planning going as far back as 1915 has given way to parochialism and backyard planning.

The 1966 Metro plan coordinating the entire Metro area services was dropped in favour of a Metro plan which is a patchwork of six separate plans each with different policies laid out by politicians. This has resulted in different levels of services and favouritism. Seven planning departments have created this problem while one could coordinate services and complete systems across the entire Metro area.

Taxation is not balanced, with one area paying more than another for the same services; Scarborough and North York currently paying more than Toronto.

The worst result of the existing system is the bickering parochial politics. Downtown Toronto politicians are punishing suburban people who need to get downtown to their jobs.

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Metro has been moving towards amalgamation steadily since 1953. In addition to seven of Metro's original boroughs being amalgamated already, police, sewage, major roads, transit and major parks are also amalgamated. In fact, almost three quarters of existing services to Metro residents are amalgamated on a Metro-wide basis.

Overlapping and duplication costs money, and it is a waste that people have already expressed a desire to be rid of. Why do we need seven planning departments or seven parks departments or six fire departments or Metro roads and local roads, Metro parks and local parks? If we have one police force, why can't we have one fire department, eliminating that Victoria Park Avenue situation I mentioned earlier?

Taking this final step to complete amalgamation would save millions of dollars each year, money that could be put to better uses such as social services, road repairs and keeping taxes down. Splitting everything up back into independent cities is certainly not an option, as it would cost far more. Neighbourhood councils, which will be

part of this, will ensure that the city core does not deteriorate, like US cities, because the residents will have a say in keeping the core vibrant.

Urban reformers, who have dominated this city since 1969, are some of the people fighting Bill 103 because they see it as the death knell of their own power in the city as the new council will most likely not be dominated by one group. These reformers have brought party politics into local government, which was not there before. We now have a situation where many councillors toe the party lines on issues which are not necessarily in the best interests of the city. This can be seen in planning policies and the breakup of the Metro plan into a patchwork of conflicting policies. These people have created a kind of fortress Toronto out of the city of Toronto council, which is anti-suburban. The city-suburb split has fragmented Metro, and the needs of the city have fallen through the cracks. Only amalgamation will fix this problem.

Spending has got out of control. Grants to interest groups which prop up certain politicians have become rampant. Meanwhile police and road budgets have been cut, some falling below levels of safety. The new amalgamated council will be able to control spending and see to it that moneys are properly distributed to every necessary service on a standardized level and that the needs of the city come first.

An example of wasted grants is the current funding by the city of a one-sided campaign against amalgamation in order to save jobs; also the upcoming referenda on this issue. These referenda are not even being done properly, with no enumeration. In my case, for example, I would have been left out if I had not checked and discovered that the city of Toronto still had me down at my old address. No enumeration is going to produce biased and inaccurate results that I really feel should be ignored.

The opposition's claim that amalgamation will destroy neighbourhoods is profoundly untrue. Neighbourhoods are made by people and not political boundary lines. The Beaches and Forest Hill will survive no matter where the political boundaries are. People identify with these areas as distinct neighbourhoods. The Beaches has been part of the city of Toronto for over 60 years and its character is distinct as ever. Scarborough and North York will still exist in the new Toronto.

Bill 103 is a necessary political reform for efficiency. The downloading of services to Metro is another entirely different issue, which should not be confused with it. In fact, the province is in turn taking over education costs, so the amalgamated city will not be responsible for putting together the existing seven school boards, one less cost to the new city.

One area that has severely suffered — and this is my expertise — with the existing system is the Metro road system. Funding has been cut to fall below levels of necessary repairs, creating dangerous conditions. Downtown politicians wish to dismantle the F.G. Gardiner Expressway because they don't like it, with total disregard of the through traffic which needs it. The existing political system has created dead-end roads ending at boundary lines, such as the Allen and Leslie Street at Eglinton Avenue and the Gardiner Expressway east at Leslie Street. The situation has cost Metro approximately

\$2 billion in potential development, including a chance to host the Olympic Games.

It is estimated that 100,000 commuters will travel between downtown and the suburbs daily by the year 2000, yet Metro politicians continue to plan bicycle trails and ignore the plight of our road system. The sensible balance of roads and transit planning has been thrown out. Cars and trucks are not going to go away. Goods cannot be delivered by bicycle or transit, and jobs are leaving the city and heading to the 905 region.

The present undemocratic situation, where vocal interest groups rule over the silent majority, will finally be swept away. I look forward to the new amalgamated city of Toronto, which will be a world-class city with standardized services, fair taxation across the board, efficient transportation and everyone having a chance to participate in government with neighbourhood councils.

The new city will need to be tied together by an efficient outer-ring road system. The ring system currently has a gap in it, a missing link located in eastern Metro. After amalgamation, this will have to be completed.

A plan to do this has existed since December 1922, and we are in the process of updating it. I urge the construction of a Bluffs boulevard, originally conceived by Norman D. Wilson, a traffic consultant with the city of Toronto and with Metro. This is endorsed by Sam Cass, retired commissioner of Metro roads, and D. Crawford Smyth, retired commissioner of the TTC. The roadway, conceived in 1922 — we were looking at the plans this morning — was endorsed by Fred Gardiner in 1954. It would connect the east end of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway with Highway 401 in Pickering, along the bottom of the Scarborough Bluffs. It can easily be done, since there is no land to acquire and some of the roadbed landfill is already in place. The detailed plans, currently owned by the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, can be updated and provide a beautiful new eastern waterfront with parks and beaches which tourists would really enjoy. It would remove through traffic from Beaches neighbourhoods by providing a bypass, making eastern residential areas peaceful once again.

**Mr Bisson:** Would you include bike trails?

**Mr Alcock:** I would include bike trails, and I would include an LRT as well.

Please pass Bill 103 to help Toronto to enter the challenges of the 21st century and bring the deteriorating, fragmented city of political parochialism to an end. Bill 103 is Toronto's only salvation. Thank you and good luck.

**Mr Phillips:** I was interested in your brief, but for one reason, some of your conclusions seemed inconsistent with your logic. You have a concern about the Metro police budget and the Metro road budget. I think those are your two big concerns. Both of those are handled by Metro council already.

**Mr Alcock:** That's correct.

**Mr Phillips:** A majority on Metro council are not city of Toronto representatives. You've indicated your concern about the Allen Expressway. As you know, that was terminated not by the city of Toronto but by the provincial government. I'm just wondering how you reached

your conclusions about supporting Bill 103 when much of your evidence supports not proceeding with Bill 103.

**Mr Alcock:** I've done quite a bit of research at the Metro archives, and plus I've been concerned about this issue for quite some time. You talk about the Allen Expressway. Actually, it was a lot of the city-of-Toronto people further south who have managed to prevent this highway. I know it was the provincial government that originally stopped it, but it was the city politicians further in the city who have prevented any possibility of extending it farther south, who have prevented the possibility of going farther south into the city. Plus the roads budget — I've just seen the figures — has been cut so far back they can't even do some necessary repairs.

**Mr Phillips:** But my point is that is a Metro responsibility, and you're advocating putting more responsibility to Metro.

**Mr Alcock:** I'm advocating that we unify the whole thing.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, I have to interrupt. We've exceeded our time available. Thank you very much.

2040

#### LABOUR COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO AND YORK REGION

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Linda Torney, Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto and York Region. Good evening, Ms Torney, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Linda Torney:** I am the president of the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto and York Region. Our council represents about 180,000 organized workers in Toronto and in York region in a number of unions: construction, private and public sector unions.

Our labour council does not support the proposed merger of the municipalities in Metro Toronto. We realize these hearings are for comment on Bill 103. However, we believe that the various announcements made during so-called mega-week are interrelated. If given a chance, we will be here to make a deputation on Bill 104 and other pieces of legislation that may be introduced talking about these issues. I will attempt to confine my comments here to Bill 103, but this may be difficult since I believe all of these pieces of legislation are driven by a corporate ideology that government and its employees are inherently bad and our major goal must be to get rid of them. We disagree with that premise.

Government is supposed to act for the common good, in the interests of all of its people. Whether this provincial government likes it or not, government is not a business and shouldn't behave like one. Businesses, after all, are not democratic institutions; governments should be, although the speed and lack of concern for the wishes of the citizens of Metro Toronto makes one wonder if this particular government hasn't lost sight of that fact.

What we find frustrating with this government is its unwillingness to be up front with its political and policy agendas. Bill 103 is more than just creating a megacity. Mega-week clearly demonstrated that there is another agenda at work, and we suspect this entire exercise is designed to position existing public municipal services for

mass privatization to the for-profit sector. If this is the intent, then we are giving this government advance warning that you can expect the labour movement in this city to fight this every inch of the way.

If we sound suspicious of the provincial government's motives in Bill 103, consider that we have not yet heard one valid reason why this merger should take place, and there is certainly no good reason why it should happen with such obscene haste. We know that the stated reason is this fall's municipal elections, but there is nothing magical about the election timing. As Mayor Barbara Hall has stated, these elections can be postponed for six months. If changes in municipal structure of any sort are to be contemplated, surely there is nothing to be lost in exploring the options fully and providing adequate time for the public to become informed and debate the issues. Major change is always achieved with greater stability when maximum consensus is achieved along with it.

Mr Leach's statement, as reprinted in the Toronto Star, quotes him as saying that no one was really happy with the way things were. This is not true. The results of a poll also quoted in the daily press showed that more than 75% of Metro residents were satisfied with their municipal government. This is hardly an indication that no one is happy. In fact, any concerns raised by anyone related to municipal structures have to do with services which are regional in scope, and the Metro merger does nothing to address the problems of the greater Toronto area. Everyone, including the government's own task force, recommends that local levels of government remain in place. It has been found again and again that this is the level closest to the people and should remain so. My own rough calculation shows that the proposed new structure has each councillor responsible for a minimum of 50,000 people. I understand that in Mr Harris's own home town, the figure is closer to one in 5,000. This is hardly equal representation.

Mr Leach goes on to cite concern over slow economic recovery, concern that Toronto is not growing as fast as cities with whom we compete and that jobs are not created as quickly. Let's take these one by one.

**Slow economic recovery:** This region has been devastated by the economic policies of other levels of government, beginning with the federal free trade agreements and high interest rate policies of the 1990s. Slow economic recovery is not the fault of municipal governments, and we fail to see how a merger will speed that recovery up, unless of course the hidden agenda is the removal of all restrictions on planning and development.

If this is the agenda, then it is not acceptable to the citizens of Metro Toronto who, regardless of their political stripe, have fought long and hard to ensure that land development is balanced with protection of neighbourhoods and environmental concerns. The balance that has largely been achieved in Metro does not mean no development, it means good development, the kind which has created the livable city of which we are proud. The livable city is, in fact, a major plank in our economic development platform, one of the stated reasons businesses locate in Metro and certainly responsible for our strong tourism industry. The livable city has been achieved by local politicians working together with the local population, including both business and community interests.

**Growth of Toronto:** This statement is unclear. If by "growth" Mr Leach means "population," and if the comparison is with the 905 area code and beyond, there are a couple of factors which need to be pointed out. First, Metro is essentially a built-up region. It is therefore only natural that population will grow faster in suburban areas. Second, current planning concepts practised in Metro try to avoid suburban sprawl, which is now recognized to be costly in the long term. Instead, infill development is utilized, creating another factor towards a livable city.

Jobs are not created as quickly: Whether this is true or not, we fail to see how a merger, which by the government's own estimates will cost 4,500 jobs over four years, is the answer to the problem. Mr Leach says those jobs will go by attrition, which misses the whole point of job creation. In a healthy economy, jobs which are vacated by retirement or relocation are filled by those who are seeking jobs. The flawed thinking which wipes these jobs off the balance sheet simply because no actual layoff was effected may be the reason we have such a high youth unemployment rate.

**Cost factors:** Every now and then, I see that the government is claiming that this will save money. For whom? Taking the downloading proposals into account, I understand the net increase for Metro Toronto is now over the \$500-million mark and probably still rising. This has to be paid for by local taxes or by cuts in vital public services, neither of which residents of Metro Toronto can afford.

It isn't the residents who save money. Is it the municipality? Everything I have read about amalgamation costs indicates they will be staggering. According to what I have read in the press, Metro and the municipalities have about 166,000 bylaws which will have to be merged, just as one item to be considered. I'm told by experts in this field that the academic literature on amalgamation is unanimous: Costs always go up. When pushed on this issue, even the government's own consultants admitted that in fact the amalgamation could produce a negative result.

I want to urge committee members to put aside partisan differences and review the comments made by Alexa McDonough to the committee last week. Ms McDonough outlined the serious problems which the Halifax regional municipality has had to address in the post-merger environment. What I took from Ms McDonough's presentation is that there are no financial savings from large amalgamations.

So who saves? If this is to do with funding the tax break, as many suspect, then only a few of the wealthy will benefit. The rest of us will spend far more than our provincial tax cut in paying through the nose for our municipal services and increased property taxes.

Mr Chairperson, I want to address the issue of amending Bill 103. I mentioned earlier one of the many frustrations with Mr Harris's government is its unwillingness to be completely up front with its political and policy agendas. We suspect that the minister, on behalf of this government, will introduce some amendments to the bill in an attempt to save face. Amendments will create the illusion that this government has listened to the public, the experts and our municipal representatives. The labour movement has learned from experience that this govern-

ment does not listen and always remains committed to its rigid ideological beliefs. We are doubtful that amendments to Bill 103, such as cost sharing of welfare across the 416-905 codes, will either resolve or diminish the fundamental flaws of the megacity concept.

The proposed megacity will not work for the 416 municipalities. The citizens know this, the municipal experts know this and the labour movement knows this, and we suspect that even the provincial government knows this.

Now is the time for Premier Harris and his government to put aside the rigid ideology and start to govern with thought, care and consideration to all perspectives on this vital issue.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

**Mr Bisson:** Linda, thank you very much for the presentation. What boggles the mind in all of this is that I remember being in government listening to the then third party, the Conservatives, always come to committees such as we have here, whenever the government came forward with a proposal, and call for cost analyses and all the numbers and figures to back up whatever it was the government was doing, and we would provide that to the extent possible. What's frustrating in this one is that I would have believed in opposition they were sincere and they would follow through with that kind of practice in government, but when it comes to this whole process of megacity, I have yet to see any documentation to support the government's claim. All of the reports I've seen and all of the committee studies that have been done up to now on the whole question of amalgamation have actually pointed, as you pointed out, in the other direction, quite frankly against amalgamation.

**2050**

The question I ask you is simply this: Do you think there is actually any documentation out there that would support this government's position, or is it just that they don't want to produce it because it's not available?

**Ms Torney:** I don't think there's any that supports it. I think one of the reasons we have not seen any solid evidence about this merger being good is that it's not a very well-thought-out merger proposal. Let's assume for a moment that there is a service someplace that is better delivered than it is right now. We even have an example of that in the history of Metro in the amalgamation of the police forces, which didn't require the merger of six municipalities in order to merge police forces.

If there were true cost savings and efficiencies to be gained in the delivery of services, then I think one would explore those services one by one with full debate and see whether there's a better delivery mechanism for that service. Surely what is really at stake here is the quality of services that can be delivered in a municipal environment, and that should be the number one concern.

**Mr Bisson:** The other thing is, and you touched on it in two parts: At the beginning you talked about government not being a business; that it delivers a service. It's there as a democracy to provide services to the people within its area. But then a little bit later you got into — you didn't particularly say that, but basically the comment is: "The minister says and the Premier says and members of the government say that nobody is happy with the status quo. The status quo doesn't work. Toronto

is awful. It's terrible. We've got to do something about it."

I just wonder how you square that off against Toronto successfully, time after time, being recognized as one of the best cities in the world to live in, not only by Forbes magazine, but by other publications I've seen in the past. How do you square that off against the status quo argument? If other people across the world recognize that Toronto is a great place to live, Toronto being the six cities within Metropolitan Toronto, certainly to God, something's been going on right in this city. Is that whole argument, in your view, just political rhetoric?

**Ms Torney:** I think it is. We are very proud of our city. It's structured in a certain way because we believe that's the way it should be structured. It's not perfect, nothing is, but if anything, it may need some fine-tuning. It's not broke, so don't fix it.

**Mr Bisson:** The other part is the big business versus small business. As a labour council, you can probably bring a pretty different perspective to this than the government members would be willing to hear, and that is the whole question that big business is more efficient. You have members of your affiliate locals who represent workers in huge companies. In your experience as a labour council president in your years of negotiating with various companies, is it necessarily bigger businesses, huge businesses that are more efficient, or is it normally the smaller businesses that tend to be more efficient?

**Ms Torney:** I think often it's the smaller businesses, but I also think, when you compare business to public sector, it's not an appropriate comparison because business, off the top, must turn a profit; it's the nature of the beast. If you add a profit motive or profit level into the delivery of public services, you have already created a situation in which you must cut costs or jack up your revenue somehow in order to meet and build in that profit. We have examples, because I really believe that this agenda is about mass privatization of public services. I think that's where this is heading.

**Mr Bisson:** That's the last question I have to ask you. I agree with you. They're not doing Bill 103 only on the basis of wanting to privatize. There are a whole bunch of other things that have taken place. You've had Bill 7, you've had Bill 26, you have this bill, Bill 103, and Bill 104. You've got all the downloading going on, you've got other successive pieces of legislation coming after, and it certainly paints the picture that, you're right, this government doesn't believe in public services and whatever is left when they have done destroying most of what's left will be delivered by the private sector. What I ask is, what does this mean in human terms to the people who make up the working class of this city?

**Ms Torney:** It means a great deal of job loss, for starters. Those are for those people who are in those services that are privatized and then downsized, because that's invariably what will happen when you add a profit motive to it.

It also will probably mean user fees for the people who are the receivers of those services. Undoubtedly, that's what it's going to mean. So whether you're working class working in the sector or whether you're using it, you're going to pay more and lose more.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

## STELLA SAVAGE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Stella Savage from the West Scarborough Community Legal Services. Good evening and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mrs Stella Savage:** Thank you. I would like to congratulate all the committee members. When I was given this time slot, I expressed concern that I might be speaking to a lot of rather sleepy people; I'm most impressed by the alertness and interest I have observed as I was listening.

I speak as an individual and I speak with two voices tonight, as a resident of East York and as a staff lawyer at a community legal clinic in Scarborough. I want to address my concerns from both these perspectives. I will be brief. I think I was mistakenly considered to be speaking for a group, but I'm an individual.

First, as a resident and a citizen, I feel that my democratic rights have been denied. Mr Harris's election platform contained no plan for amalgamation. I certainly could never have voted to support appointed officials overseeing any municipality. I have no problem in accepting that major changes were and are required to reduce costs and streamline service delivery and to bring some uniformity to property tax assessment across Metro. The best way may be to combine the current six municipalities into one mega-unit, but let's not jump into such major changes in a hurry.

What is the main purpose of Bill 103? Is it to reduce the cost of local government? Hardly. Where amalgamation has already taken place in other parts of Canada and in other countries, costs have consistently increased to a smaller or greater extent. So cost-effectiveness can't be the driving force.

Is it to improve the quality of life in Metro? If this is the case, then maybe it will be worth extra dollars, but in cities around the world where amalgamation has been effected, the opposite has been the case. I refer among others to New York, Detroit and London, England. Costs have gone up. Services have been reduced: dirty streets, fewer recreation facilities, increased crime, unkempt parks, in fact places unattractive to either business or tourists.

Is it to increase employment or decrease it? Cost saving involves layoffs. Who has seniority in six different municipalities? What will the hourly rate be for comparable remaining employees: the highest or the lowest rate in any category? Who pays the severance for all the surplus employees? We know who will pay the welfare when the UI benefits run out. Are unions relevant? Is the megacity a ploy to weaken public sector unions? I suspect it might be.

As a citizen, I want time to find the answers to the above questions. I believe all citizens are entitled to an informed opinion and to participate in debate before amalgamation becomes a fact. Why does amalgamation have to be rushed? If it's worth doing, then let's slow down and do it properly. If that means delaying municipal elections, let's delay them.

The time frame for passage of Bill 103 is so tight it will already be almost impossible for new municipal

boundaries to be in place in time for November elections. This raises to my mind the biggest question of all. Why is the province trying so hard to rush through Bill 103? What is the government covering up? What is it hiding from me? What is the government afraid that I will find out? Maybe this committee can answer that question. I fear that Bill 103 has been introduced at this particular time to act as a smokescreen to steer attention away from the effects of downloading, which is being introduced concurrently.

As a lawyer in a community legal clinic serving low-income people in Scarborough, I see amalgamation as putting the services most needed by this group of people at risk of being out of their reach. I see libraries, swimming pools, other recreational facilities having fees attached, removing them from the reach of those who need them most.

## 2100

We already know that downloading is not revenue-neutral. I will highlight just two of the many areas of my particular concerns.

**Social assistance:** Contrary to the recommendations of the Crombie task force and every previous report, social assistance has been shifted to municipalities. The potential for reduction in benefits is horrendous. Cash-strapped municipalities will vie with each other to provide the least amount to those in need so as not to encourage an influx of indigent persons from neighbouring areas. How many taxpayers will push for higher property taxes to pay for welfare? It is my opinion that the major changes proposed by Bill 103 will be used to deflect provincial responsibility for the inevitable tax hikes and service reductions.

My second area of concern is social housing. The Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority is responsible for thousands of units. It's generally acknowledged, I think, that an amount somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$220 million is immediately required to raise these housing units to an acceptable standard. That money will of course have to come from property taxes. How many people will willingly pay higher taxes? Renters pay taxes too. I suspect the number who will pay willingly is not very great.

The result will be disintegration and probably a reduction in numbers of social housing units, more people chasing fewer units at the same time as landlords in the private sector will be allowed to increase their rents as taxes increase, if the misnamed Tenant Protection Act passes as proposed.

Social assistance and social housing are very closely connected. Only in subsidized housing can a single welfare recipient find affordable accommodation. A shelter allowance of \$325 does not get you very much in Toronto; \$511 shelter allowance a month for a family of two is equally restrictive. These are the people that I feel will suffer most with increased market rents.

These are some of the problems that I fear are being buried from the public by this government rushing amalgamation at this time. I hope my fears are wrong and I thank you for listening to me.

**Mr Jim Flaherty (Durham Centre):** Thank you, Mrs Savage, for being here this late in the session this even-

ing and for expressing your concerns. You are associated with a community legal clinic, you are a lawyer, and when I listen to your concerns, I think also on the legal side of things. I think you'll agree that the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force have, as an amalgamated police force, done a fairly good job in the performance of their duties Metro-wide over the past several years now. Is that a concept with which you would agree?

**Mrs Savage:** In some areas, yes.

**Mr Flaherty:** I don't think you'd suggest that we go back to local police forces, given the nature of urban municipalities on a broad scale these days and the type of challenges that are faced by police forces.

**Mrs Savage:** I haven't said that I'm opposed to amalgamation. I'm saying I don't know enough about it. I feel I'm being rushed into something I'm not ready for.

**Mr Flaherty:** I think also you're moving away from the criminal aspect of things, from crime in our communities. Even in the property aspects of our communities, we have one registry office, for example, to deal with the various areas of the former municipalities that now form the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto — I'm sure as a lawyer you're familiar with that, both in registry and in

land titles — and we don't want to back to the inefficiencies of having people having to travel all over the metropolitan area to search a title to a property. I think of those two, immediately, as examples with which you would be familiar as a lawyer.

Are you concerned, then, that we move forward in an orderly way to maximize those efficiencies, as has been done with the police and the registry systems, which are two systems that come to mind?

**Mrs Savage:** I'm concerned that too much is being done at once without its being possible as an individual to understand everything. I think the effects of downloading and the effects of amalgamation are clouding each other and that's what concerns me.

**Mr Flaherty:** I appreciate your concerns. We are having five weeks of hearings, three days a week on Bill 103, and of course this is an opportunity, as you have done, to have concerns expressed, as you have eloquently expressed them. I thank you for that.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here this evening. We're adjourned until 9:05 tomorrow morning.

*The committee adjourned at 2107.*

## ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
G-64	2968	1	14	<b>Ms Stone:</b> When I go grocery shopping, I don't go to
G-64	2989	1	27	<b>Mr Seiling:</b> Much so. Tourism in Toronto has already





## STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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**Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York PC)

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Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Simcoe Centre / -Centre PC)  
    Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North / -Nord ND)  
Mr Terence H. Young (Halton Centre / -Centre PC)

*\*In attendance / présents*

### Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Mr John R. Baird (Nepean PC) for Mr Danford  
    Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex South / -Sud L) for Mr Sergio  
    Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North / -Nord L) for Mr Gravelle  
    Mr Ed Doyle (Wentworth East / -Est PC) for Mr Danford  
    Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East / -Est PC) for Mr Stewart  
Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East / -Est L) for Mr Sergio  
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    Mr Tim Hudak (Niagara South /-Sud PC) for Mr Young  
    Mr Morley Kells (Etobicoke-Lakeshore PC) for Mr Young  
    Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre / -Centre PC) for Mr Flaherty  
Mr John L. Parker (York East / -Est PC) for Mr Tascona  
Mr Derwyn Shea (High Park-Swansea PC) for Mr Young  
    Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel PC) for Mr Hardeman  
    Mr David Turnbull (York Mills PC) for Mr Tascona

### Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South / -Sud ND)  
Ms Annamarie Castrilli (Downsvieu L)  
    Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold ND)  
Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South / -Sud PC)  
    Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt L)

### Clerk Pro Tem /

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Legislative Research Service

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ISSN 1180-5218

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 36th Parliament

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

Thursday 20 February 1997

**Standing committee on  
general government**

City of Toronto Act, 1996

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

Jeudi 20 février 1997

**Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales**

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto



Chair: Bart Maves  
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Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Thursday 20 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Jeudi 20 février 1997

*The committee met at 0905 in room 151.*

**CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO**

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

**SOUTH ROSEDALE  
 RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION**

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the standing committee on general government, where we are hearing Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act.

We'll begin this morning with the South Rosedale Ratepayers' Association. Welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes in which to make your presentation. Please begin.

**Mrs Valerie Sirén Schatzker:** Madam Chairman and committee members, thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the South Rosedale Ratepayers' Association. My name is Valerie Sirén Schatzker and I am president of the SRRA.

Our association was established around 1911 and as such is the oldest residents' organization in the city. In its letters of incorporation of 1936 the association is enjoined to promote the welfare of south Rosedale and preserve and improve its character as a residential park area and to promote good government of the city of Toronto particularly as it affects the community.

Our association has fought many battles to carry out this mandate and has succeeded in maintaining our green and peaceful streets and much of the historic charm of south Rosedale. It and the other equally lovely residential areas in the downtown core of the city, from the Beaches to Roncesvalles, from Lawrence Park to Cabbagetown, are the jewels in the crown of "the most livable city in the world," the characteristic which sets us apart from many American cities which could once boast of such features but are now hollowed out, derelict and desolate because of ill-considered tax measures and remote government.

Of all the battles our association has fought, none has presented as grave a threat as Bills 103 and 106 and the other legislative measures announced by the government. If these are passed, our city will face punitive taxes,

decreases in services, a dilution in political representation and a bigger, more unresponsive, more costly civic bureaucracy. The fragile residential communities of Toronto will be among the first to suffer.

However, along with all citizens of Ontario we will have lost something much more precious: a municipal government which is close to the people, our traditions of consensus and our trust in government.

South Rosedale is known as a Conservative bastion and gave strong support to our MPP, the Honourable Al Leach, in the last election. Many of those who voted for the Common Sense Revolution thought the campaign against big government would curb excessive expenditures and the unwieldy bureaucracies that had grown over time. They did not realize it meant greater centralization and government in the hands of fewer. Lifelong Conservatives now see that this government does not understand the principles of conservatism, which are to make change with care, conserving what is good in the institutions of the past, and many tell me that in the next election they will not vote Conservative.

In a recent forum on the megacity in the Globe and Mail there was a revealing exchange between Mr Gilchrist and the other participants. Mr Gilchrist complained that most of the people who have come to speak to this committee on Bill 103 had already made up their minds. Yes, Mr Gilchrist, the South Rosedale Ratepayers' Association has made up its mind. We have studied Bill 103 and listened to the government's defence of it; we have read widely on the subject and consulted with experts. We are convinced that it is not a good bill.

We also want to assure this committee that we do not wish to waste your time. We are here to ask you to listen. We hope that through this process we can inform you of just what we find offensive in Bill 103 and that you will take our grave concerns seriously. We do not think it can be amended. We ask you to withdraw it.

Bill 103 has few items of substance. All it reveals about the governance of the new city of Toronto is that seven municipalities will be amalgamated and that the council of the new city will be composed of 45 members whose terms of office will begin on January 1, 1998.

In this new city the 2.3 million citizens of Metro, now represented by 106 Metro and city councillors, will lose much of the access to their political representatives they now enjoy. Ratepayers throughout the Metro area have closest contact with their city councillors, who look after the services which most directly affect neighbourhoods. Contact with our Metro councillors is much less frequent.

Our individual city councils are much more responsive since each understands local concerns, the historic development of each municipality, and since each has its

distinct vision for the future. Our experience with Metro has been much less satisfactory. Its bureaucracy is much larger, and because its concerns for local problems are much more dilute, one municipality can be easily outvoted by the others. This level of government, the one we find the least responsive, the least effective, is the one the provincial government wishes to impose on the six cities. This more remote council, incapable of reacting with sensitivity to local nuts-and-bolts problems, is to replace our city councils which are working well in this respect.

We are told that neighbourhoods will be served by community councils and volunteer committees. Community councils will not replace our city councillors, whose wards are smaller and whose duties are less onerous. As far as neighbourhood committees are concerned, we fear that they may be hijacked by special interest groups. We are aware that our venerable association, which has been an effective grass-roots organization for 86 years, is limited in its ability to represent all voices in our community. We would neither compromise its effectiveness through political appointment nor wish to dilute its access to our elected representative through an appointed committee. We also know of no jurisdiction where neighbourhood committees have worked. In Winnipeg, whose 25-year-old amalgamation is still controversial, they were abandoned in the first three years because the system kept the voters at a distance.

The rest of Bill 103 is frighteningly vague. Everything other than the amalgamation and the numbers on the council will be decided by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and his appointees, the board of trustees and the transition team. They will fix the new ward boundaries, decide what further legislation is necessary to implement Bill 103, determine the limits to revenues and expenditures of the new city, organize its structure and modes of operation, hire department heads and other employees and determine the function and membership of neighbourhood committees.

The decisions of these non-elected persons, responsible only to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, cannot be reviewed or questioned by a court, nor are they subject, as all elected officials are, to the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, which ensures that decisions are not made behind closed doors. Their terms of office are also not limited in the bill. Furthermore we, the citizens of the new city of Toronto, will have to pay whatever expenses these appointed officials incur.

Bill 103 is therefore an act which creates only the barest bones of a new city, gives extraordinary powers to non-elected officials and allows taxation without representation.

We are concerned about the first years of transition. We know that the new system of tax assessment and the downloading of welfare and other services will present enormous problems that may occupy the council for the first six months at least. In these deliberations the transition team will decide the limits of expenditures and revenues. Since the provincial government promised that taxes will not go up, we may expect drastic cuts in services.

The coordination of the regulations of seven different municipalities is also vague. Whose vision in the drafting

of new planning codes concerning land use and zoning will prevail? That which each city has evolved to protect its neighbourhoods, one that will impose a suburban vision on the old urban core, or the province's vision of Toronto?

Will the network of social services Toronto has built so carefully to respond to the complex needs of the inner city be maintained? Will public works and parks departments be downsized to the bare minimum?

Perhaps the transition team will take upon itself the responsibility for conducting business as usual until the council is able to assume its full duties. It will be able to do so with full impunity before the law. Will ratepayers' associations be able to count on the checks and balances of committees of adjustment and land use and zoning committees to protect their neighbourhoods?

The key bureaucrats will also be appointed by the transition team. Their contracts will have to be respected by the new city council. Will they be chosen according to the province's vision of Toronto's future? If its vision allows casinos, trade centres or grand sports and Olympic facilities to take precedence over the preservation of our colourful ethnic and unique residential communities, over concerns for history, architecture and the maintenance of the everyday human scale, the features that make Toronto the queen of cities according to Fortune magazine and the United Nations, will swiftly disappear.

We are particularly concerned about relaxing regulations which help preserve our greenbelts and natural preserves. These have been slowly built up since the early 1950s. Each step in the struggle was hard won, but the benefits are available to all citizens.

Our concerns also go far beyond this bill. Bill 106 and the forthcoming legislation the government has announced are inextricably linked with the legislation on the city of Toronto.

The South Rosedale Ratepayers' Association met frequently with Minister Leach to oppose market value assessment, AVA and, its latest incarnation, current value assessment. Our opinions were not considered. South Rosedale wants to pay its fair share of taxes but has serious reservations about a system that may threaten the residential communities and the downtown business core and is the most costly to implement and maintain.

We are fearful about the impact of downloading and so-called disentanglement. We have felt insulted by the KPMG report. We resent that Metro Toronto is singled out among all other Ontario municipalities for imposed amalgamation. We wonder why new wards are to be created from the federal ridings. Toronto developed in concentric arcs around the original settlement on the lake and the city wards reflect this, keeping neighbourhoods of generally the same age and character together. We ask why this unpopular and immensely expensive plan is being forced upon us when the most urgent reform of governance needed, according to the Golden report and the Who Does What panel, is the coordination of services in the GTA.

In the *Globe and Mail* forum, Mr Gilchrist gave assurance that the government would be open to considering a model for governance in Metro other than the single-tier model. Our association takes this opportunity

to present an alternative to Bill 103 and the government's further plans.

Please withdraw this bill. Leave the current two-tier system of Metro government intact for the time being to conform with the two levels of government in the other four regions of the GTA.

By withdrawing Bill 103, you will not burn any bridges. You will not have to worry about the narrow time frame before the next civic election. You will save money, for as all the experts have demonstrated, the administrative savings and costs of politicians and their staffs are minuscule, while the transition costs for this unwelcome experiment and the enlargement of the bureaucracy to service a population of 2.3 million will cost millions of dollars.

Without Bill 103, you will be able to concentrate debate on the crucial financial bills. Considering that your package of municipal legislation represents substantive change and is so controversial, we ask you to prepare a white paper before drafting legislation on the downloading of services and the organization of the Greater Toronto Services Board. When these bills are debated and passed, the government could then present a white paper and hear debate on local governance for the entire region.

Abandon the promise of a tax cut. The need to fund it seems to be the rationale for this controversial package of municipal legislation. These complex issues of governance, tax assessment and disentanglement of services are best assessed on their own merits. If the legislation is carefully considered and widely supported, it will result in a wise plan for our city's and our province's development in the next century. There are many residents of south Rosedale who may benefit significantly from a tax cut, but a great number have indicated that they would forgo it, preferring that our municipal services are left intact and our health care and education systems not decimated.

Finally, we ask this government to be aware of the dangerous mood of dissent that has risen in our community and is spreading throughout the province. Those who have appeared before this committee represent citizens, distinguished experts and politicians who care about our city and give much of their time to promoting its welfare.

We ask this government to respect our parliamentary and time-honoured tradition in Ontario of seeking consensus. If you do not act pay attention to the large segments of the electorate and act swiftly to heal the wounds opened in this debate, the proper processes of good government will be more difficult in the future, the council of your new city will reflect the anger of the voters, the willingness of citizens to help make new systems work will be alienated, and I fear that people and businesses will hesitate to remain or settle in a city so riven by hostilities and tension.

**0920**

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** Thank you, Mrs Schatzker. I certainly do appreciate your thoughtful presentation of an option that you've presented to the committee and to the government side. I hope they look at it, because we had another option presented yesterday by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation similar to yours that said to forget

about the tax cut and ensure that local services aren't paid for through a property tax explosion.

I guess the comment you made that's critical here is, traditionally in Ontario, as with the creation of Metro originally, we did it through consensus. Why do you think this government has abandoned the consensus process we have been used to in Ontario and Toronto?

**Mrs Schatzker:** I'm not exactly sure why they've abandoned it. I sometimes think that this Conservative government has gone beyond the traditional right-of-centre Conservative that we've been familiar with in this province and has moved far to the right, and said so perhaps in the Common Sense Revolution. This is a revolution, a revolution of the right. But I know that the fact they're not listening to us is very, very distressing to the citizens in our area who speak to me when we meet them at the meetings we are holding. Everyone is very perplexed, upset, angry at the fact that they're not being listened to. So I'm here to plead that the government listen to us.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs Schatzker. We've run out of time.

#### BARBARA GODARD

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Barbara Godard, please. Good morning, Ms Godard, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Barbara Godard:** Madam Chair and members of the committee, je m'appelle Barbara Godard. Je vous remercie de m'avoir invitée à faire une présentation sur le projet de loi 103. Je tiens à exercer mes droits de citoyenne, but rest assured, I shall continue in English.

My mother's family came to Toronto over 100 years ago as "masses" gardening for the Masseys. My father's family, the MacKenzies, as parliamentarians initiated the Lord's Day Act of Canada among other pieces of legislation. I am a ratepayer in ward 5 where my house is on the Baldwin lands near Robert Street, named for the celebrated Torontonian, Robert Baldwin, who formulated the principle of responsible government, giving ultimate authority to the people through their elected representatives. Mindful of the charge laid upon me by the past and of my responsibility to the future, to the claims of my son and my students, I come before this committee today to voice my opposition to Bill 103 and the amalgamation of six local governments into one big city government.

My objections are both to the process and the substance of the proposed restructuring of urban government. The proposal has been hastily prepared and contradicts the government's own stated objectives. More important, its provisions may well be unconstitutional. I am gravely concerned, should Bill 103 be passed, about the abrogation of the rule of law and the rights of citizens to taxation by elected representatives which have been the cornerstone of democratic government in Ontario for 160 years.

Improvement helps any organizational structure keep functioning well. Other great cities have much to teach us. In Paris, where I lived for a number of years, not only did every suburb but each ward have its own town hall. Local government is highly developed in France and

there it's the provincial level of government that has been deemed redundant. Toronto could well learn from cities such as Tokyo and Seoul, where I have gone to talk about Canadian studies, about the effective coordination of transportation at local, regional and intercity levels, where there is strong financial support from all levels of government. However, Bill 103 is completely silent on such questions. Indeed, it has nothing to say on the details about the future visage of the city, nothing except amalgamation of six cities into one megacity.

The absence of specific information is unusual with legislation as sweeping as Bill 103. Normally a white paper explaining the government's proposals would be prepared first. Such careful planning has not been carried out. The citizens of Toronto are asked to take on faith the government's claims that the present proposal will lead to improvement through the reduction of duplication and saving of money. This is impossible when the proposed legislation flies in the face of conclusions of previous studies of municipal governance. Indeed, the Golden report specifically rejected amalgamation of the existing cities.

Moreover, this particular motion to create a supercity with large councils distant from the electors, under the overlapping jurisdiction of appointed trustees and transition team, supplemented by some undefined appointed neighbourhood council, introduces many more levels of government into Toronto, only one of them elected. This is a direct violation of the government's pre-electoral promises in the Common Sense Revolution where it states, "We will sit down with municipalities to discuss ways of reducing government bureaucracy with an eye to eliminating waste as well as unfair downloading by the province." Bill 103 contradicts these stated goals by increasing bureaucracy. It is impossible to give it any credence when the provisions of this bill would prevent the city from carrying out its democratic function of giving government responsible to the taxpayers of Toronto.

Bill 103 concentrates primarily on usurping the powers of the elected municipal representatives in what is an unprecedented coup. According to a number of lawyers, this exercise of provincial jurisdiction to wipe out local democracies is unconstitutional, and I refer to the Globe of February 7. The heinous sections of the bill put the elected representatives of the city under the absolute control of appointed trustees and a transitional team, which is nothing short of a dictatorship.

Trustees are charged with reviewing the operating and capital budgets of the city. They are directed to report to the minister at his request, not to the elected municipal officials. Section 11 limits the powers of elected officials on matters of taxation and expenditure. Section 10(d) restricts the financial powers of elected authorities over the reserve funds of municipalities. The bill, however, provides no guarantee that these reserve funds raised from taxes are to be spent only for the municipalities in which they were collected. There is no assurance that they will not steal our tax money, and with impunity at that, for section 12 specifies that the decisions made by the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed or challenged by a court of law. Such powers granted to

appointed officials are a clear violation of the fundamental principles of Ontario democracy since 1840. They place such officials above the rule of law, not responsible in any way for their actions, and this is unconscionable in a parliamentary democracy.

More disturbingly yet, there is no limit to the term of office of these appointees who, again in violation of the rule of law, were supposed to begin their duties months prior to the passage of the bill. Section 10 says that the cabinet "may dissolve" the board of trustees on or after January 31, 1998. However, since section 16(h) requires the transition team to cooperate with the trustees, there is a presumption that the trustees will remain in office indefinitely.

The transition team is likewise granted dictatorial powers. It is this team, not the elected officials of the new council, which would establish the new city's basic organizational structures and consider "what further legislation might be required to implement this act." Like the trustees, the transition team is accorded total power over the new council to vet taxation and spending and to hire "department heads and other employees." An exemption is granted to them from liability for its actions. Its decisions are also to be final and above the rule of law.

Municipal elections to the new council will be virtually meaningless since the Minister of Municipal Affairs is given authority by this bill to prevent the municipal government from carrying out the usual functions of city governance, nor is there any terminal date for the exercise of this unprecedented authority, for the transition team "may" be dissolved on or after January 31, 1998, but there is no requirement to dissolve it at all. Restricted from speaking to the press, the activities of these appointed bodies are shrouded in secrecy, and the document of the Common Sense Revolution said there was "No hidden agenda." Nothing is in the open in this bill except the arrogation of power. This suspension of all democratic rights smacks more of the totalitarian regime of Stalin than of the rule of law and government by elected representatives long sanctioned in Ontario.

There are a number of other sections of this bill which affect the democratic rights of citizens. The gerrymandering of the electoral boundaries of wards for the new city council to align with those of federal wards would make representatives unresponsive to citizens. Wards of over 50,000 make for ineffective local government and disfranchise the citizens of Toronto in relation to citizens of other Ontario local jurisdictions with smaller wards. Moreover, the establishment of such large wards disproportionately affects women's rights as citizens to participate as elected representatives. Larger wards mean more expensive electoral campaigns, and this constitutes a significant barrier to women entering politics.

Little information is given regarding the neighbourhood committees to be established. Their "function is to be determined." The vagueness is disquieting. How these would relate to existing ratepayers' associations is unclear. Currently, as associations elected by members, these grass-roots organizations play an important role in ensuring that taxes are spent wisely and effectively in neighbourhoods.

My parents belonged to one of the earliest ratepayers associations, founded by our next-door neighbour, who was a treasurer of the Progressive Conservative Party. Their intervention modified plans for the subway. However, had they been attended to more closely, more money might have been saved, as they knew the site chosen for the barns and switching yards was traversed by a buried stream. Pumping out the quicksand delayed opening of the subway by several years. The local knowledge of ratepayers' associations is important in preventing costly mistakes.

0930

The existing associations in concert with the elected councillor also carry out mediation among property owners. Discussions had just begun in November with the councillor on my back laneway where such mediation is needed to reconcile the rights of some private owners of the lane with the interests of other users. The need of those with large cars gouging ruts in the lane to have it paved conflicts with those concerned about the environment and protective of the mourning doves nesting in the mud. With the uncertainty about the future of the city council and its authority over such matters as lanes, negotiations have been suspended. Many other matters of local concern and economic importance are also in suspense, contributing to the chaos in social and economic arenas.

I have not mentioned here the staggering implications of the provisions of other projected legislation that would download \$1.7 billion in costs for welfare, health and assisted housing costs on to Toronto municipalities with the negative consequences falling disproportionately on the women of Toronto, nor of the implications this would have for other programs supported by the city, such as the Toronto Arts Council whose provision of seed money has synergistically generated much creative energy to make Toronto a major cultural centre, the third largest in the English-speaking world, with writers such as Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje that the federal minister of trade and commerce wants to export. Without the help of the Toronto Arts Council there won't be any culture at all.

**The Vice-Chair:** Excuse me. I just must interrupt you, because we're running to the end of your time. So if you would just wrap up.

**Ms Godard:** Yes. None to offer to the rest of the world. None to teach to the next generation of Torontonians, my students.

In my recent research I have been reading the parliamentary debates on the Quebec Act of 1774. At issue then too was the rule of law and the authority of the people's elected representatives. The great parliamentarian Edmund Burke, upholding the principles of democracy, demanded more facts "for the sake of the public good" so that he could "give an honest vote." As he said, "Supposing the bill to be delayed for a whole year, the extent of the evil on our side will be that we shall have more information; and as for the Canadians, they will remain a little longer in the same situation in which they are at present...necessity [though] — necessity, the tyrant's plea — is urged for proceeding immediately."

History judges severely those who have sought to do away with democratic processes.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. I'm sorry, you have run out of time.

**Ms Godard:** Do the members of this committee, of this Legislature, want to bear the ignominy of being remembered as those who disfranchised the citizens of Toronto?

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry. I must ask you to stop.

**Ms Godard:** I urge the members of this committee to follow the honourable lead of Burke and of their conscience to recommend the withdrawal of Bill 103.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

ROB DAVIES

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Rob Davies. Good morning, Mr Davies, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Rob Davies:** Good morning, Madam Chair, members of the committee. I want to thank you for affording me the opportunity to speak to you today. I want to first give you a little bit of background about myself.

I was born in Metropolitan Toronto. I was raised in this city, in this region, and I have had the opportunity to benefit, I believe, from the very attributes that have made Metropolitan Toronto the best place to live in the world, namely, the safe and secure neighbourhoods, the economic opportunity that exists for people and the economic opportunity that draws people from around the world, the cultural diversity and the cultural arts community that make Metropolitan Toronto a nice place to play.

As a very young person, I was drawn to politics. In fact, my very first political campaign was in 1976. I had the opportunity of helping a grade school teacher who ran for a position of what was then called separate school representative, on the public school board. Unfortunately, he lost that campaign, but I was bitten with not only the bug of politics but also the bug of public service, which is very important to the strength of our communities.

In 1991, I was fortunate enough to be elected as a city councillor in the city of York, and I represent the municipal ward 3 in the city of York. I have had the opportunity of working on many campaigns since that first one in 1976. I've had the opportunity of being involved in many, many issues in the community. So I come to you I think with a little bit of experience both as somebody who was on the periphery of political action and as an elected representative who currently represents about 16,000 people in Metropolitan Toronto.

I will tell you that I do not believe Bill 103 is a panacea for all that ails Metropolitan Toronto. I also don't believe the passage of Bill 103 portends the apocalypse of safe and secure neighbourhoods, economic opportunity, or our cultural diversity and the cultural arts that make the city a good place to play.

I do believe the new governance model in the very beginning will cause some confusion. I think that's obvious. There's some confusion now. I think over time that will subside.

From my constituents I'm hearing that they recognize that in the media, in the chamber next to this room upstairs, both opponents and supporters of Bill 103 have been cited on numerous occasions for their hypocrisy or

for the various comments that they may have made last year or five years ago or 10 years ago. What I'm hearing from my constituents is that they're really quite sick of the backbiting. They want to hear some of the rationale and the reasons for and against Bill 103, but they can't over the din of some of the screaming and shouting and yelling that has taken place thus far in many of the public forums.

With that in mind, I took a slightly different approach as an elected representative and as a local councillor in that I held and hosted and moderated two public debates on Bill 103. I invited both supporters and opponents of Bill 103. In fact, two members of this committee attended and participated in two separate debates on the very issue. I gave my constituents an opportunity, very directly to the people they see on television every day, to ask them what would happen in a post-Bill 103 Metropolitan Toronto, to ask them the reasons and the rationales for support or opposition to Bill 103. I think it was a very fruitful exercise and a very healthy exercise, and I would only hope that type of debate would occur across Metropolitan Toronto a little bit more frequently.

Some of the things I want to tell you about the city of York I think will speak to one of the reasons why I'm going to give my conditional support to Bill 103. I want to be clear here: I'm not expressing my support necessarily for some of the downloading and uploading that may go on, but I know this committee is specifically concerned with Bill 103 and that's the issue that I'm going to speak to.

The city of York, which was founded in 1793, is over 200 years old. Over time, with the various rejigging of boundaries, we found ourselves in a situation with a very, very small industrial-commercial tax base. Most of our tax burden, in terms of the percentage between industrial-commercial and residential, is on the residential taxpayer. What that means is that in the city of York we have the highest mill rate of any of the Metropolitan municipalities.

In addition, we find ourselves in a financial crunch in terms of not being able to provide some of the services that the other neighbouring municipalities are able to provide. In fact, a constituent a number of years ago put it quite succinctly. He said that in the city of York, what we do is we milk the cow through the fence, so that if we want to use libraries, we go to the city of Toronto. If they want to access a recreation centre, like the Joseph Piccininni centre, they have to either pay a surcharge to use the programs and the facilities or they misrepresent their address when they are signing up for programs.

So we lack recreation facilities in the city of York. We have probably the lowest income per capita of all the communities. In other words, our community is in the greatest need of some of these particular services.

**0940**

We also have a situation with some of our infrastructure, particularly in terms of our stormwater and sewer system, where we have an antiquated system where people, if they get a 15- or a 20-year storm, experience severe flooding in their basements. We have not been able to address the infrastructure problem for many, many years because of the financial demands, because of the

lack of an industrial-commercial tax base, because of the very real concern of many local politicians, such as myself and those who have gone before me, not to pass on extremely high tax increases to the residents and the business community we represent.

It is my belief that while Bill 103 is not my first choice — I would have preferred perhaps a four-city model — I would rather see Bill 103 pass than be defeated. I don't believe the elected representatives that I sit on council with today, my cousins at the city of Toronto or North York or Etobicoke, in the advent of Bill 103 will suddenly turn into black-hearted accountants who will tear the heart and soul out of Metropolitan Toronto and let some of the things that we support — the social programs, the recreation programs, funding for the arts — go begging and suddenly have this change of heart a year after the passage of this bill. I just cannot see a future Mayor Lastman or Mayor Tonks or Mayor Hall necessarily becoming the Simon Legree of a new Metropolitan Toronto. I just don't believe it.

What I do think will happen in the community that I represent, and what I'm hoping will happen, is that there will at least be a level playing field with respect to some of the services that other Metropolitan municipalities take for granted. I would like to see the end of basement flooding at a cost of several thousands of dollars to the residents that I represent. I would like to see either the elimination or the reduction of some of the user fees for parks and recreation that our constituents have suffered through for many, many years. I would like to see a recreation centre, a real recreation centre, not four rooms in a park, built to support some of the very urgent needs of our young people, of our families, and of our senior citizens in our community.

**The Vice-Chair:** I must ask you to wrap up. We're coming to the end of your time.

**Mr Davies:** Okay. There are some things in Bill 103 that personally I don't like and I think might need to be modified. The trustees issue is one that I take some issue with. I think the community councils need to be spelled out a little bit more and maybe that should happen, and I think the provincial government needs to very quickly spell out some of the process by which they would implement the amalgamation of the seven municipalities. That's something that some of our non-government organizations, our social service agencies, are very concerned about: Should they fold their tents or should they continue operating as per usual? Will they be successful in grant applications in a future city or will they have to themselves amalgamate with other non-government organizations and charities?

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Davies. We've run overtime. Thank you very much for making your presentation this morning.

**VALERIE HUNNIUS**

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Valerie Hunnius. Good morning and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Valerie Hunnius:** Thank you very much. Good morning, Madam Chair and committee members. My name is Valerie Hunnius and I've been a resident of

Toronto since 1952. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to the committee today because I believe that each one of you has a profound opportunity through these hearings to examine carefully what the public has said and review the evidence.

I am not, myself, a supporter of the Progressive Conservative Party, though I can recognize that within the 40-year period when the party essentially controlled government in Ontario, there was recognition for the importance of consensus in introducing legislation in the House. That spirit, that important parliamentary tradition, seems to have been dismissed by this government in its effort to accomplish change. What I hope this committee will do is to consider courageously its options at the end of this hearing process and recommend that the government not proceed with Bill 103.

I believe that Bill 103 is pernicious legislation which creates systemic inequalities for Torontonians and other citizens of Metro Toronto among the citizens of Ontario by increasing the ratio of representation in the proposed megacity to one representative for every 50,000 voters, as compared to one for every 5,000 voters in North Bay, for example. In principle, this betrays the concept of equality before the law. While on the surface it may adhere to the concept of no taxation without representation, it does so in an inherently unequal way.

In particular, I am profoundly alarmed that this legislation, even prior to passage, gives excessive powers to provincially appointed trustees, retroactive to December 17, to control the assets, budget, all financial operations, hiring, promotion and job termination responsibilities which are properly the mandate of elected representatives of the local governments. Even more disturbing are the additional powers placed in the hands of a transition team to develop the structure, organization, mandate and recommended legislative framework for the new megacity.

It frankly scares me half to death that with the exception of the police services board, none of the decisions of the trustees or members of the transition team can be appealed or questioned by a court and that many of their decisions are exempt from requirements under the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, various freedom of information and protection of privacy acts and any other act with which Bill 103 is in conflict. This tells me that this particular statute and its application is being created outside the normal rule of law. Why?

The Fair Tax Commission, the Golden task force and the Crombie Who Does What advisory panel have all identified problems with respect to economic development, delivery of services and tax inequities within the greater Toronto area. There is no doubt that our assessment base should be changed to ensure fair investment opportunities and equity of service delivery throughout the whole area. This may require fine-tuning or even negotiated changes between local governments within the GTA and changes to regional government. There are rigidities in the assessment system which are inequitable and need to be changed. There are harmful discrepancies in tax rates which discourage investment in some localities and provide unfair advantage in others. As well, I believe there is an unfair tax burden for tenants as opposed to homeowners. In my view, it would be a great

pity if provincial control of the mill rate for commercial and industrial property continues to move more and more revenue away from that base and on to the residential property base. I am certain this government will not share my view in this respect, but I do acknowledge that this government is demonstrating courage in taking action to update property assessments.

Bill 103 in itself, however, does not address any of these issues. David Crombie in his report to Mr Leach was adamant — and I'm paraphrasing here — that if there were no new relationship created to harmonize the economic and political relationships within the GTA, creating a megacity of Toronto would make things even worse. Even Hazel McCallion, the redoubtable mayor of Mississauga and a long-time Tory, is on record as saying that amalgamating all the local governments in Metro into one megacity will be bad for Mississauga.

What really alarms me is that the government seems prepared to push this legislation through the House without regard for either the expert opinion of its own consultants or considered recommendations of all of these various commissions. It is especially unnerving to hear the Premier state that the government will ignore the results of local referenda. To ignore the will of the people and to blatantly profess to do so, it seems to me, is false courage which can only be perceived as expedient. I really believe, even in the short run, it is a politically dangerous thing to do.

Why is the government doing this? Is it merely, on the one hand, intending to silence the progressive voices which citizens of Toronto frequently elect to represent them at city council? Are we in Toronto being punished? Or is it, on the other hand, a means to create a tax base sufficiently large to appear to be able to offload social expenditures on to municipalities, social expenditures which should be derived from a progressive provincial tax base?

In particular, Toronto has had a remarkable history of improving the conditions of living of our most vulnerable citizens. It has not been an easy task to protect these services during the progressive downloading of costs from the federal government to the provincial government for health care, post-secondary education and welfare assistance, and the resulting restriction of provincial transfers to municipalities. It has required tough political decisions with a lot of community support to maintain essential social services in the city of Toronto. It really frightens me that after all the offloading of hard service costs and social transfers on to the municipal property tax base, my city will no longer be a good place to live or to do business.

#### 0950

This government intends to make it easier for the private sector to deliver a great variety of public services, with an expectation of improved efficiency. I ask you to remember that a benchmark for efficiency cannot be considered unless service standards are maintained, standards of quality as well as standards of accessibility. The last recession in Metro took an enormous amount of purchasing power out of our community and we are still paying a price in high unemployment. I ask you to consider the impact on our local economy if public sector jobs paying adequate salaries are outsourced to large

companies employing non-unionized and possibly contingent labour. There will be even less money to support local economic development.

At the end of these hearings you on the committee will have some tough decisions to make. I only ask that all of you consider this legislation in terms of its likely historical impact. It will do no good to save the tax break at the expense of hollowing out the economic engine of Ontario, and any economic benefit the tax break could provide will do no good and produce no jobs if public services are reduced to commodities available only to some for a user fee.

It is still possible to put in place an effective change process with adequate public input. I implore you, especially the Progressive Conservative MPPs among you, to urge your party caucus to withdraw Bill 103. I applaud the member for Wentworth North who has had the courage to oppose amalgamation in the Hamilton region. I hope some of you will have similar wisdom and similar courage when you come to the conclusion of this process.

**Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie):** Thank you very much; certainly some very interesting and important input here this morning. The presenter before you said that in the Common Sense Revolution the present government said, "We will sit down with municipalities to discuss ways of reducing government bureaucracy, with an eye to eliminating waste as well as unfair downloading by the province." We see in this bill, under section 12, that what they're doing can't even be challenged by the law. I was wondering if you have any thoughts on what happened on the way to the forum.

**Ms Hunnius:** It seems that what they have wanted to do is to create some kind of a windfall to support the tax break, and the only way they could do that was to do the swap between education and all the other downloading of social services. I think it is a rather unprincipled and ineffective expectation that there will be efficiencies emerging out of this that will cost less. I think all the evidence shows it is going to cost a great deal more, and unless they are going to reduce the resources that go into education, they're not going to get the money to support the tax break.

**Mr Martin:** The presenter before you spoke of another model; even he, an obvious Tory supporter, spoke of another model. Is there something specific you would be willing to bring forward if a forum was opened for the presentation of another model, or are you simply saying leave it as it is?

**Ms Hunnius:** I'm not simply saying leave it as it is at all. There are a lot of problems within the whole GTA, but I think the problems have been defined at that level; they've already been well defined by a series of commissions. I think it is time to have public hearings on some of those issues dealing with the problems within the whole GTA, strengthen the delivery of services within the whole GTA, keep social transfers off the property tax base, deal with the improvement of some of the hard costs within a larger area, and then look at revisions if there are necessary revisions in local governance to improve the situation.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Hunnius. We've run out of time.

## ADRIAN HEAPS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Adrian Heaps. Good morning, Mr Heaps, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Adrian Heaps:** Thank you very much. As someone who has lived and worked in a number of countries around the world and as someone who has lived for over three years on native reserves in southern Ontario, I feel I can bring to this discussion a perspective of human experience and comparison of various communities where I've lived.

First off, though, I want to thank the Conservative government for creating such an incendiary issue as amalgamation of cities, because for the first time it has motivated people from all walks of life, from business, from labour, from young to old, in a unique display of social unity that this province has not seen in recent history. It has motivated people to think and care about their cities, about where they live and work. People no longer take their cities and communities for granted.

But this issue has also created a crisis. In a crisis, people have the opportunity to see how their elected officials act. It's usually a test of strength, of leadership, of commitment to their constituents. In this crisis that we call proposed amalgamation, we have seen the true mettle of people like Mr Harris and Mr Leach and Mr Gilchrist, the most vociferous proponent and front man of this archaic scheme.

It's easy to criticize the government and say that this idea is ridiculous, but that would be counterproductive. Today I want to spend my valuable time before the committee in trying to convince them and the government that there are constructive alternatives to the government's proposed legislation.

As Mr Gilchrist told me a couple of nights ago when he was at the debate in Scarborough Civic Centre, there are over 800 municipalities in Ontario, of which over 300 have chosen of their own accord to amalgamate or merge services to some degree, including of course municipalities in Metro. However, these communities, and I stress communities, have chosen their own path instead of having it imposed upon them. They have seen in the context of their local needs where they can create economies of scale and provide increased benefits to their constituents.

The mayors of the six Metro cities have offered a plan to merge several services and organizational duties that would save millions of dollars and reduce the number of politicians by 52%, with increasing accountability, yet the government has chosen to ignore this approach, along with every other report including the government's own hired experts. But this is old news.

In several instances, Premier Harris has referred to himself as the CEO of the province and to the citizens of this province as shareholders in some kind of mammoth corporation that he refers to as Ontario. This is a government that likes business practices, so let's look at simple organizational economics. In an organization when one wants to restructure in an efficient manner, the most effective method is the following.

First, you set goals that the organization can realistically reach. You then discuss these goals with the various departments until they and the management come to a viable and realistic expectation of results. The department then goes out and implements the programs to meet the goals. You then assess the results.

These are time-honoured organizational strategies that have proven results. Why can't the government sit down like good managers and discuss realistic goals and expectations like any competent CEO would in a self-respecting corporation? You would be surprised at the results if you approached improving the services and communities of our cities in this manner.

Somehow I think the Ontario government believes that cities in Metro are incompetent in managing their own affairs. Yet Scarborough, for example, is considered to be the number one city in delivering local services, as determined, incidentally, by the province's own auditor. Scarborough has the lowest staff-to-resident ratio of any city in Metro. If anything, this city should perhaps be used as a model for efficient municipal government.

Yet the government chooses once again to ignore the truth, because amalgamation is not about truth; it is not about benefiting the communities in this great area we call Metro Toronto; it's about destroying communities in the interests of power and control.

I will be the first to state that not all local representatives accomplish everything to their full potential. I will also state for the record that there is plenty of room for improvement because, committee members, cities will never be perfect. And the reason why? Because they are run by human beings, with all their imperfections. Yet most of these people are dedicated and committed to their cities. Cities are not just about cold, efficient delivery of services. They are about identity and civic pride.

#### **1000**

I constantly hear Mr Leach and Mr Gilchrist state that people in foreign lands know where Toronto is but don't know where Scarborough or Etobicoke is. Why should they? They don't even live here. I can categorically tell you after working in countries around the world that the international trade potential of a city is not diminished or for that matter enhanced by the simple virtue of its name. People in foreign countries care about the quality of the product, the individuals who produced it, not about where it came from.

However, for the people who live and work and play in those cities like Scarborough, contrary to your belief, they are proud about their local affinity to a city and community they have helped to build. The very fact that the government does not understand this is already a blatant example of how far removed some provincial politicians are from their local constituents. Imagine how much worse this problem will be if your proposed legislation goes through.

Something else to think about: When you remove the identity of a city from its community, something happens. People over time start to lose contact with their elected representatives. It might be something simple like a building permit or a traffic calming request. Even for simple requests like this people will be forced to go to

some anonymous building where hopefully their representative will not need a map to figure out where they live.

I know the government intends to have neighbourhood councils be responsible for such local matters as traffic calming and speed zones, but these require a skill level that includes urban planning skills, the ability to analyse engineering studies and traffic flow patterns. Somehow I don't think neighbourhood councils will be up the task. They will still have to tap into experts somewhere at the respective departments of some vast city hall.

More important and much more relevant, on relatively more vital issues like race relations or crime, people will find it much more difficult to find a local councillor who truly understands their local problems. Eventually, people will grow tired of the frustration of trying to contact someone. Over time, frustration will turn to apathy and cynicism and the motivation to even exercise their democratic right will gradually atrophy away.

Is this the kind of community we want to build for Ontario's future? Local government and local representation is a standard that has been validated by virtually every professional and individual who has come before this committee, yet once again the government chooses to ignore the overwhelming evidence.

I notice that one of the pivotal issues in this rancorous debate is the downloading of social and other services to the municipal level. First, I regret that people on both sides of the issue refer to these subjects in a cold statistical light. These are people, not numbers. They are single mothers struggling for survival, they are the impoverished and they are the elderly. The government tends to look at these people as a volatile problem that they do not wish to connect themselves to. It's a hot potato and the province wants nothing to do with it. I find this repugnant, that the callous nature of the Harris government can be so insensitive to people's needs.

I ask you, if you really are genuinely intent on improving the quality of life, then why not treat the disease instead of addressing the symptoms? If we actually intelligently tackled through preventive measures the problems of the people who receive social services, we wouldn't even have to talk about passing the buck and avoiding the real responsibilities of a provincial government.

But once again Mr Harris chooses to ignore the truth. Maybe in Mr Harris's megacity we can use our local charity casinos to offset the tremendous social costs that will befall municipalities.

I urge the committee to use whatever it is in its power to look further than money and power as the only building blocks of a society. This was not a mandate offered by the government in their election platform. Yes, they professed to being more efficient, but they did not, I believe, promise to destroy our local communities and cities. They did not promise to upheave the social structures that have worked, for the most part, quite well.

If amalgamation is such a great idea, then let's approach it on a small-model basis with one city providing the example and see if the theory is everything it cracks up to be. However, I would caution the government not to use Halifax as a shining example.

The government has suggested it will not recognize the results of the Metro-wide vote on this issue, yet the very process of using referendums that Mr Harris decries is the one the government is actually proposing as a bill in Queen's Park.

Cities provide a sphere of influence that indirectly touch all those who choose to live there. I choose to live in Scarborough because for all its good and bad points it is my city, it's my community where I can exercise some control over my own destiny. This is not a privilege; this is a civic right which will be violated for every citizen in Metro if this bill goes through.

We are in a crisis of confidence, where leadership and common sense must prevail more than ever. This is not a time for immature posturing, where politicians dig in their heels just to maintain some warped political position; that's conduct more becoming of two high-school teenagers squaring off in a playground fight, not adults. This is not a playground, and too much is at stake.

I ask you to look at the logic and the insurmountable evidence of the arguments presented by everyone who has come before this committee. I ask you for perhaps what may be the first time in years in your political lives — Mr Harris — to start to look at what actually motivated you to get into politics in the first place. I hope for your sakes it was to serve your community's interests and not your own.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Heaps. You have used up the 10 minutes.

#### PETER ALLEN

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Peter Allen. Good morning, Mr Allen, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Peter Allen:** I'd like to thank the government and this committee for the opportunity to address Bill 103 issues. My name is Peter Allen, born and raised several blocks north of this Legislature. I am a trained civil engineer and businessman with some international perspective and community involvement with local organizations such as the Young People's Theatre, the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research.

I will address Bill 103 under four topics: the megacity plan, PC reform towards less government, the big picture and anti-democratic tendencies.

First topic, the megacity plan: Where is the strategy, feasibility, schedule? What is the capital and human resources requirement? How, specifically, does it improve our lives? Is there a cost-benefit analysis, overall and segmented? Where is the risk assessment?

This is a huge project affecting millions of people, and yet it has had only cursory expert opinion and discussion. Particularly, we citizens all would like to examine fiscal breakdowns and estimates to better plan our own individual and community futures in our own cities. Anything less than this is an insult to our intelligence.

I'd like to remind the government that you are playing with our money. I don't really see the need for political expediency in this situation. I suggest following up the

Harris government's strategy with a monthly scorecard so that we can share the results of the project we're in fact financing. I've made this suggestion several times to MPP friends of mine and party people.

How about a frank discussion of the wild cards in the deck: Hydro, workers' compensation, OHIP, asset sales and write-offs, privatizations, differential pensions? Too many unexplained variables of social welfare downloading, property market value assessment, concentration of education and local services all leave a muddled picture. Last week's published financial information, for instance, is incomplete; it had to be revised immediately. It had excluded, as well, key fiscal points — old debt, new debt, debt service — as well as the effect on our debt structure and credit rating.

What's the implementation plan for the next morning? Who does what? What about contracts, old and new; assessments, old and new; policies and systems, old and new? I'm somewhat relieved I don't personally have to manage this pending chaos, but I'm unhappy that we have to finance it.

How about a full comparison of the social balance sheet before and after this mega-experiment? Almost by definition, a mega-experiment is illogical, it's an oxymoron, it's unscientific, it's too risky. We don't want to lose anything, because we don't have to perform a mega-experiment; we're already a productive and caring society. If we have to do it, let's at least keep this mega-experiment carefully controlled and sequenced.

1010

Second topic, PC reform and Bill 103: I'm actually in favour of moving to a smaller, more responsive government. Government growth over 30 years has sucked too much oxygen out of the system, so I think reform has merit. I'd like to try shifting the paradigm. But on Bill 103, I'm totally in the dark. What are the ultimate goals of the reform? Will we be left with better- or poorer-quality lives? Details please. Will the needy still have the same, essential social net to count on? Why is the price of this the demolition of local government? Why use expediency and secrecy? Thus, we citizens are automatically relegated to being a somewhat stunned opposition instead of having a more normal partner status. For me this is a confusing, unstable situation. I don't like it. It defies definition.

Churchill once described a fanatic as one who can't change his mind and won't change the subject. It seems this government can't change its mind and immediately changes the subject.

Third, the big picture and Bill 103: Our province continues to overlook, in my opinion, a greater strategic opportunity to enhance our lives, namely, developing the world-class economic unit bounded by Toronto to Barrie and Hamilton to Oshawa. This region is a dreamland of opportunity, possessing critically abundant amounts of population, capital, trade, infrastructure, quality of life, law and order, traditions, political stability and skilled, competitive workforces. Most of these things are absent in the globe.

The region already produces more than a third of Canada's wealth. Upgrading this to world status, with its

manufacturing, service, transportation and communication facilities to a high standard within this powerhouse, is an extremely exciting prospect. We have free trade, it's high-volume trade, immediate access to the eastern USA industrial powerhouse. It's an extremely efficient model and a unique opportunity for the Ontario government to seize now. Toronto will then be better defined in the centre of the region. Bill 103 issues can then be better addressed in a context of Toronto at the centre of Canada's most dynamic region.

I consider democratic freedom my most valuable personal asset, and so under the fourth point, anti-democratic tendencies of Bill 103, I'd like to just mention that recently I was in Bruges, Belgium, on a visit. I found out about freedom's beginnings in this very prosperous trading city of the 13th and 14th centuries. By 1301, a stranger seeking freedom could enter the walled city, be recognized by a councillor or sheriff and be thereafter a free man. This was the first instance of the end of feudalism.

Democracy has actually continued to make a lot of progress since 1301. Bill 103 is a retrograde step, however, in its elimination of what we have, which is our most democratic government, which is local government. Local government needs continual fine-tuning, but not destruction.

Further, I am offended by my own provincial government saying in effect, "You can have a referendum if you want to go to all that trouble, but the effort will be wasted, because we won't pay any attention to it"; or "If you debate this profusion of dramatic bills, 103, 104, 105, 106 and so on, we will bring closure"; or "Generations of locally elected governments will be simply swapped for a few dozen appointed supertrustees to govern you"—nicely protected, incidentally, from normal judicial process.

I think a closer reading of Alice in Wonderland is warranted here. I must say I'm quite unimpressed with this game of mirrors.

To summarize:

- (1) The megacity plan is sketchy, risky and suspect.
- (2) The PC reform plan to streamline government has turned into mass confusion.
- (3) Bill 103 is part of a dangerous juggling act, if you can imagine it: juggling fresh eggs. Drop one and it's broken forever. The bigger regional picture may be the important target for the provincial government, and certainly more within its jurisdiction.

(4) Disbanding some of our wonderful democratic traditions admired by the world is unwarranted and totally inappropriate. As Adlai Stevenson said: "In America, anyone can become president; that's one of the risks you take." Transposed to Ontario: Anyone can become Premier; that's one of the risks you take. This ironic statement may not be so funny. We're all holding our breaths. We need to return to the commonsense part of the revolution.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you, Mr Allen. You've used up the time allotted. Thank you very much for coming here this morning.

## COALITION OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to move on to the Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Viresh Fernando:** On behalf of the Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians, I am pleased to make this presentation. My name is Viresh Fernando. I am an economist by education, and a lawyer and a chartered accountant by education, training and experience. Currently, I practise full-time as a lawyer dealing with international settlement and investment issues, and various aspects of commercial and tax law. I am here as a member of the board of the coalition.

Let me begin my presentation by asking you a rather simple but necessary question: Have all of you read the KPMG report and draft Bill 103 in its entirety? I suspect the answer is no, as otherwise you would have convinced your fellow legislators that the KPMG report, which has been used to promote and justify amalgamation, is fatally flawed and that Bill 103 is the most vindictive and worst political decision in the history of Canada since perhaps the scrapping of the Avro Arrow.

I will leave it to others to demonstrate the negative consequences of Bill 103 in many other areas and restrict myself to addressing the failure of the bill and its proponents to deal with the bill's impact on the various cultural communities spread across Etobicoke, city of York, Toronto, North York, East York and Scarborough.

Many federal elections ago, former Prime Minister Joe Clark spoke of Canada as a community of communities. This theme was adopted and endorsed by no lesser Conservatives than Don Getty, Bill Davis, Larry Grossman, and of course our very own David Crombie. Those of us who helped define and refine this concept saw it as reflecting and celebrating the historical distinctness of the aboriginal people from the European settlers, the English from the French, the Hutterites from the Ukrainians, and the more modern differences such as between the Jewish and the Palestinian people, the Sikh and the Guyanese people, and the Jamaican and the Somali people, as examples.

Inherent in the concept of community of communities, or multiculturalism, was a recognition that in any public policy discussion in Canada we had to heed the fact that we were not a melting pot, that we had in our midst groups that have vastly differing needs and therefore expected to be and would be treated differently. Also central to this concept is the notion that people would be consulted in a genuine manner on issues that are of deep concern to them and affect every aspect of their lives.

As our organization represents not only south Asian ethno-specific social and community organizations, but other mainstream organizations that serve south Asians, the concerns we raise with respect to the KPMG report and draft Bill 103 are shared by many social service, ethnic and cultural organizations across the six cities.

Speaking as an economist and a chartered accountant, I am shocked that the KPMG group would publish the report they did on the supposed cost savings of amalgamating the six cities. They have ignored every study that

contradicts their recommendations. They have ignored the basic principles of economic forecasting. At the very least, KPMG should have followed the guidelines issued by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants with respect to forecasting, and in fact these are required of us chartered accountants and I'm shocked KPMG did not follow this.

If a study similar to the KPMG study was included in the prospectus of a company wishing to issue shares on the Toronto Stock Exchange, the Ontario Securities Commission would tell them to get to hell out because they do not comply with the requirements. I am sad that members of my own profession have, for the sake of a \$100,000 fee, made unfounded recommendations that will lead to the destruction of the city that Fortune in its November 1 issue picked to be the number one international city.

**1020**

Let me deal with just one of the basic flaws of the KPMG report, because I don't have the time to go through the rest. On pages 8 and 9 of the report, KPMG acknowledges that to achieve savings by removing duplication and achieving greater efficiencies, it is important to identify so-called cost drivers. It is only by highlighting, identifying and changing these underlying factors that expenditures can be controlled. The three types of cost drivers identified by the report are:

(1) External factors such as weather, topography, population, age, income, crime rates etc, and decisions of senior levels of government. KPMG believe they are static and will not impact on their calculations.

(2) The levels of municipal government services are considered a second and distinct category of cost driver. KPMG does not expect the levels of service to change in the short or medium run and therefore expect no savings in this area.

(3) The third and only area in which KPMG identifies potential savings is in a third type of cost driver named internal or institutional costs which they define as inputs such as number of staff, purchase of goods and services, and of course wage rates.

The entire KPMG study is based on the premise that the first two cost drivers I just referred to, external cost factors and levels of service, will remain the same while \$865-million worth of savings will be squeezed out of staff salaries and the purchase of goods and services.

KPMG also states that their prediction of \$865 million in savings will be effected only if we assume that all things remain equal.

As anyone who has taken a first-year course in economics will confirm, other than to make a basic point about supply and demand curves, the phrase "assuming all other things being equal," which is the KPMG approach, is never used in any serious discussion of economics, political science or finance by any self-respecting academician, forecaster, or anybody.

That is simply because it is clear to even the first-year university student — I would say now to a grade 13 student — that there never can be a situation where everything else is equal. Economic and social policy, financial policy, marketing policy, laws, customs, fashion and our own lives are constantly changing and responding

to new developments. It is utter nonsense to talk about a static world, particularly in a technological era. But as you will all read on page 9 of the KPMG study, this is their central premise.

Therefore, we now are left with KPMG's own admission that external cost factors were ignored in their review. In other words, they recommended drastic changes to the governance of the six cities in which we live by ignoring everything that is central to the cities, such as weather, density, population, age, income distribution, employment rates and crime figures. They ignored these figures not because these are irrelevant, as they do admit that these are all very relevant factors, but rather because they felt that none of these could be changed in the short or medium run. If the factors that are most important to our everyday lives cannot be changed, why in the world are we being frog-marched into amalgamation?

The next issue that is obvious from reading Bill 103 and the KPMG study, and I urge all of you to please do this, is that the debate over the amalgamation of the six cities is devoid of any mention of diversity and equity. Over 50% of the population of Metro Toronto today — although it is not reflected in this room — is of neither English nor French background. In fact, in 1996 it was projected that the racial minority population was 41% of the population and will rise to 53.2% by the year 2001. In some schools in Metro the student body is 70% to 75% non-white.

All these facts were easily available to KPMG and are crucial to any accurate analysis, yet they were either assumed away or ignored. Of course, Mr. Leach did not bother to take these facts into account either in drafting Bill 103.

Members of the committee, for groups such as ours, access to services and localized municipal government is of great concern. By "access" we mean the ability to have our local councillor listen and respond to our concerns. By reducing the number of councillors by 60%, our ability to be heard and served will have been drastically curtailed. The further government is removed from people, the less impact marginalized communities like ours will have in the governance of our cities.

The reduction of the number of councillors will have another insidious impact. As has been demonstrated in the United States, the larger the wards, the more difficult it is for members of cultural communities and new immigrant groups to seek office. The lower the number of municipal councillors, the higher the value to business élites of having these councillors to people like property developers who have traditionally bought these councillors in different ways, not necessarily by paying them outright.

Let me deal with another aspect of the source of anticipated savings as projected by KPMG in relation to the disproportionate impact it will have on marginalized communities. To operate programs as diverse as battered women shelters, youth recreation programs, English-as-a-second-language classes and programs for seniors, we depend on the availability of funding from different levels of government. These are programs that not only help the integration of all groups in the society, but also

produce economic benefits in the society by increasing their productive capacity. Obviously, if you teach somebody to speak English, you are helping them to go out and get a job. Clearly, therefore, the squeezing of savings that KPMG calls for will have a drastic impact on our communities in this way as well.

Then there is the issue of offloading. I won't spend much time on this, except that Mr. Eves and Mr. Martin have become quite adept at it. The ultimate losers once again are the less powerful in our society.

Being a practising lawyer, I must mention that even if Bill 103 does not violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms by making it lawful for residents of the same city to receive differing levels of service, it certainly violates the spirit of section 15, the equality section, and section 27, the multiculturalism section of the charter, by making some of us bear a larger burden than at present while receiving a lower level of services. By the way, I believe that Bill 103 does violate section 15 of the charter.

In conclusion, we urge you to reject the KPMG study, as by its own admission it is at best highly speculative and in my opinion very partial and misleading. The issue of whether the six cities should be amalgamated must involve much wider discussion and more credible study.

All that Bill 103 will achieve, besides increased distrust of elected officials such as yourselves and scepticism of their highly paid consultants, who will produce reports for whatever the fee is, is the destruction of a central idea that small government responsive to the people is the essence of Canadian democracy, whether we know it by the name of responsible government, multicultural democracy, community of communities or any other familiar name.

I shall be prepared to answer any questions you may have. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** Thank you, Mr Fernando. I appreciate your taking the time to make a presentation before us here this morning. Could I just go back to one of your opening comments that KPMG should have followed the guidelines issued by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. That's a very damning accusation.

**Mr Fernando:** Absolutely.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Have you filed any kind of complaint with the institute, and if not, why not?

**Mr Fernando:** No, because it was only last night that I had the time to go through sections 40 to 50. By the way, Mr Gilchrist, you may remember we used to belong to the same party at one time. Sections 40 to 50 clearly state that any sort of projections like the stuff that has been put forward by KPMG should come from management, and this study of course did not come from management.

**Mr Gilchrist:** So it's your submission to us here that you will be making a complaint, or are you just making a spurious accusation before us?

**Mr Fernando:** I have to consider that because there are certain implications to that.

1030

**Mr Gilchrist:** Let's get on to some of the other stuff because we only have a few seconds, Mr Fernando.

Please explain to me why eliminating, for example, the artificial political boundary at Victoria Park will in any way influence any of the communities within Scarborough. Please tell me substantively how changing the number of politicians affects, for example, the south Asian community in Scarborough East.

**Mr Fernando:** Let me answer your question by asking you a question: Why don't we then eliminate the boundaries between Eglinton and St George-St David and just have one person elected for the whole province? We need local representation, Mr Gilchrist. You knew that. You used to live in Scarborough.

**Mr Gilchrist:** That's not the point. You yourself alluded, Mr Fernando —

**Mr Fernando:** That's the whole point. Why don't we have one Canadian Tire store?

**Mr Gilchrist:** Mr Fernando, if that's your submission —

**Mr Fernando:** I'm not going to drive out to your store in Scarborough to buy something; I'm going to go to the one at Davenport and Yonge. We need local access, local contact and local impact.

**Mr Gilchrist:** You yourself, in your submission, alluded to the fact that there are other models out there, that the mayors have done a study, that we're somehow flawed in our vision, but the mayors themselves said, "Reduce to 48 councillors," virtually, unless your premise is that four councillors across all of Metro makes a difference. If the mayors themselves believe we can operate with 48 councillors, the only difference being that they'll show up in six city halls instead of all sitting in one city hall, where there can be more cooperative planning on all those big-ticket issues such as transit and water and sewers, what is the difference?

**Mr Fernando:** The difference is this: If I live in Scarborough, I will go to Scarborough city hall if I need snow removed, if I need a pothole fixed or whatever.

**Mr Gilchrist:** No, you won't, you'll go to your councillor.

**Mr Fernando:** Or if I need a committee room booked or if I need a playing field for my cricket match, I will not have to come down to the corner of King and John Streets or wherever the headquarters are.

**Mr Gilchrist:** You still won't. You'll call your local councillor and you'll still live in your community.

**Mr Fernando:** Come on, Mr Gilchrist. You've always been like this.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Likewise, Mr Fernando.

**The Vice-Chair:** We have completed our time available. Thank you very much for coming forward today and making your presentation.

#### ALLIANCE OF SENIORS TO PROTECT CANADA'S SOCIAL PROGRAMS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Mr James Buller, from the Alliance of Seniors to Protect Canada's Social Programs. Good morning, Mr Buller. Please begin.

**Mr James Buller:** I'd just like to point out that I am a long-time resident of the city of Scarborough and that 20 years ago I was appointed to the Scarborough Civic Award of Merit committee. I've been very active in

community affairs for many years in Scarborough. I noticed Mr Gilchrist commented on how few people from Scarborough appeared before the committee. I want to reassure him that Scarborough has a keen interest in these events.

My submission is as follows. Every summer my cottage neighbour, a retired journalism professor from the megacity of New York, travels to his modest cottage on an island in Ontario's French River Provincial Park to "regain his sanity," as he chooses to put it. New York City became a megacity to the great detriment of its residents. I think you've already had submissions from a former New York City resident to this committee as to why she left New York City.

Other famous megacities include Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Mexico City and Cairo, Egypt, all of which have far inferior living conditions to the cities of Toronto or Scarborough.

This drastic and ill-considered action will have an enormous negative impact on all the cities within Metro Toronto, and the offloading of the enormous costs to the municipalities for numerous vital social services such as social assistance, homes for the aged, long-term-care facilities, child care and other services will result in reduced services and higher municipal taxes. I see that Metro has already announced a tax increase coming up. The whole exercise is a terrible, irresponsible step backwards designed to give a huge tax cut to the wealthy at the expense of those with more modest means.

Our alliance is only too aware of the serious harm being caused seniors and the disabled by health care and hospital funding and staffing cuts, with hundreds of registered nurses being terminated and entire hospitals facing outright closure. The province's severe cuts to public transit funding — and mention has been made of public transit — now make Metro Toronto transit riders pay the largest cash payment proportionally of any other city on the North American continent, thanks to this provincial government. We've had two successive fare increases plus substantial cuts in service. One would think that Mr Al Leach, the former general manager of the TTC, would have spoken up against these harmful cuts which have impacted very harshly on seniors and the disabled, with cuts to Wheel-Trans and so forth. Al Leach was the former general manager of the Toronto Transit Commission.

Separate documents I am filing today show the neglect of safety equipment and training evident during Mr Leach's tenure as TTC general manager. Accordingly, due to his record of incompetence and neglect, we strongly urge the immediate removal of Mr Leach from his position as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the public good. I won't go into the question of rent controls; the majority of Metro Toronto residents are renters and many of them move.

Due to the current negative economic climate, serious mass unemployment and the added unemployment amalgamation would cause with many layoffs, added social welfare costs, severance packages, buyouts, a newly created bureaucracy and other negatives, we strongly urge that Bill 103 be withdrawn in the public interest.

We also request that the ill-advised 30% tax cut to the wealthy be scrapped as they already have received a substantial personal income tax cut from the federal government in 1984, when the Mulroney government cut the top personal income tax rate from 36% down to 29%. Many wealthy Ontarians use numerous tax loopholes to pay even less. Ontario has a minimum corporate tax rate of only 4%. This should be increased without delay. Recent information from Statistics Canada reveals that in 1994 some 81,462 profitable corporations with profits of \$17,100,000,000 paid absolutely no federal corporate income tax whatsoever. The province can help correct this. No wonder the deficit is so high.

Revenue available to the provincial government must not be squandered by ill-advised and unneeded tax cuts to the most affluent who have already had their taxes cut by the federal government. Don't compound the injustice. I'd like to ask the members of the Legislature later on if they think that Frank Stronach of Magna International, who pocketed \$47 million last year, needs a tax cut, or if Mr Barrett of the Bank of Montreal and the other CEOs of the major chartered banks, who pocketed several million dollars each in salaries and bonuses last year and are multimillionaires, need a tax cut. Evidently Premier Harris thinks they do. I don't think the majority of citizens of Metro Toronto agree with him.

The downloading of the enormous costs of social programs to the municipalities has been condemned by David Crombie, who headed up the Who Does What panel; by the president of the Toronto board of trade and the business community; by Anne Golden, the president of the United Way of Metropolitan Toronto; and by responsible municipal officials including Metro's social services commissioner, Shirley Hoy. For Al Leach to state that this downloading is revenue-neutral is absolutely false and he should resign or be dismissed for misleading the Legislature and the people of Ontario.

The recent negative cost and social impact of the Halifax amalgamation shows the dangers of this irresponsible, ill-advised provincial government Bill 103. I would also mention that the current number one bestseller in the non-fiction category is a book called Boom, Bust and Echo. You've all probably heard about it. You can get it from your local public library. It states that large cities, megacities, with populations over one million people are the least efficient and the most costly and that the best cities in providing services are smaller cities.

#### 1040

We urge that this legislation be withdrawn forthwith and adequate funding be granted Metro Toronto and all Ontario municipalities. This government can still correct this massive proposed legislative blunder. We urge this committee to close ranks and adopt our proposals.

I have Hansard here from February 8, 1996, and Mr Gilchrist was present when the multiparty finance committee met. Our first recommendation, which was one of 16, was as follows to the government: "Provide full extended funding to all municipalities as in the past and do not institute regressive block funding cuts to the municipalities." This was a year ago, so we had some prophetic foresight as to what might be coming down the pike.

I filed supplemental documents here, very recent information I've received from the chief general manager of the Toronto Transit Commission. I'd like you to pay particular attention to the time frame, going back to 1978, about malfunctioning safety equipment, such as the Ericson trip arm mechanisms which failed during the subway accident, and the inadequate training of new subway drivers. This was changed after that accident by the new general manager and the TTC commission.

The lack of adequate safety equipment and adequate training while Mr Leach was general manager helped contribute to one of the worst disasters, the horrible subway disaster, which was very costly. The economies of skimping on training were false economies; they were penny wise and pound foolish. Sometimes the economies that are being sought by government are counter-productive and harmful.

If any of you have any questions, I'd be only too happy to answer them.

**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** Thank you very much for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. A couple of questions: Seniors have been hit very hard by the cuts made by the Harris government in the last couple of years or so. When in opposition, Mr Harris said to the then government, "It's not a money problem; it's a spending problem." Why do you think he's making cuts now? Is it a spending problem or is it a money problem or is it his incompetence that is the problem?

**Mr Buller:** My own opinion is that some of these proposed changes are ideological. I feel that the whole idea of a 30% tax cut and the downloading of very costly services to the municipalities is an enormous contradiction; it doesn't add up. Here you have on the front page of the Toronto Star a prominent Conservative, David Crombie, "It's absolutely the wrong thing to do," Crombie blasts the Tories on welfare." Al Leach said in the Legislature before he introduced this: "I've consulted Mr Crombie and we're on board. We have one voice." That's not what he said afterwards. He was absolutely shocked. I have an extensive quotation here. I feel it's essential that the provincial government be big enough to say, "We made a mistake." We all make mistakes. I frequently meet with my local Conservative MPP in Scarborough Centre and he knows of my concerns.

**Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre):** We have met many times.

**Mr Sergio:** I don't want to cut you off but we have lots of questions. Do you have a question too? I'll continue. This proposal here, Bill 103, nobody knows where it came from really. Maybe Mr Leach and Mr Harris had it in their back pockets many moons ago, but it's totally not what Mr Crombie expected the government would bring on the table. We had the Crombie report, the Golden report, the Trimmer report; every other report had some type of consultation, if you will, among the commissioners themselves. This has not received anything. We have been asking the government: "Give us the information. Give us the data. Give us the costs. Give us the figures. Give us whatever material you have to support your views that this legislation is good for the people of Metro and indeed Ontario."

We believe they don't have anything. If they don't have anything, do you think they should proceed with this legislation until they have provided the people of Ontario with an opportunity to view all of that information?

**Mr Buller:** No, they definitely should not proceed. There have been some very, very important observations made by Metro social services commissioner Shirley Hoy as to the enormous added costs to Metro and the municipalities of this whole scheme. This goes beyond Metro too, this transfer of these services to the municipalities. I feel that her figures are only the tip of the iceberg. She also stated they could be considerably higher.

We all know what happened to a number of services. For instance, at Metro they were talking about privatizing homes for the aged, which would have lowered standards because provincial standards are lower. It was only a public outcry that forced Metro to back off on this. There have been other threats to social programs from Metro, and it's only public awareness and activism that forced Metro to make some changes in the right direction. This provincial government has to respect the professional opinions of civil servants like Shirley Hoy who have analysed the costs and have said, "No, this is definitely not revenue-neutral." Al Leach misled the Legislature. There's no doubt about it.

**Mr Sergio:** In terms of the process and the democratic process, if you will, do you see this as an important enough issue that we should have had a binding referendum?

**Mr Buller:** I would think so. I urged it. I wrote a letter that was published in the Toronto Star urging a referendum on this issue so that the public could really be informed and make an informed decision, but that was evidently not acceptable to the province.

**Mr Sergio:** You know we're going to legislation now with respect to referenda?

**Mr Buller:** I heard about that, yes.

**Mr Sergio:** Don't you think this would be an appropriate time and an appropriate item to delay this until we have all the workings of the referendums worked out?

**Mr Buller:** Absolutely.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Buller, for coming here today.

#### JOHN KELLEN

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on John Kellen. Welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr John Kellen:** Good morning to the honourable members of the committee. My name is John Kellen and I am here to express my support for Bill 103. I would like to voice my opinion on how our municipal governments have failed the people of Toronto. The plan to amalgamate the municipalities is a result of waste, duplication, overtaxation, and a political structure lacking planning, coordination, cooperation, and consideration for its citizens.

I would like to briefly comment on our "small" municipal governments and their irresponsible method of managing our money. The figures obtained from the 1993, 1994, and 1995 financial information returns

clearly demonstrate their inability to exercise the financial constraints that most of us have been forced to do in our personal lives. Total government costs for the six municipalities and Metro have increased more than 10% from 1993 to 1994. There was an even greater increase from 1994 to 1995. The figures show municipal increases ranging from 0.5% to as high as 31.2%. That's 31.2%. This is unacceptable.

These increases often bear no relation to improving services or increasing accessibility, just poor management of my hard-earned money. We continue to be victims of unnecessary competition with our neighbouring municipalities. With amalgamation, we will elect people who can manage in our best interests, people who will maintain or improve services with less.

**1050**

The current system is inequitable. Why does the spending dramatically vary without a relationship to service programs and levels? The answer is that the current system does not work and demands change.

For example, why is the response to fires on municipal boundaries determined by politics and not the ability to serve the public's best interests? Why do the expenditures per capita for fire protection services drastically vary in each municipality? Do the people of Scarborough deserve less service than their neighbours in East York? Amalgamation would not only bring about cost savings through efficiencies, but would also save lives by sharing modern technology such as dispatching.

Again, why does the construction and maintenance of local roads depend on which side of the border one resides on? Why do roads simply end at municipal boundaries? Is this efficient? Is this in our best interests? No. It is a result of political disagreement and a lack of continuity.

In the area of water, sewage and waste management, we have another example of inconsistency and mismanagement. Total expenditures per capita in 1995 illustrate major differences in spending and service levels. In East York, expenditures were half of North York and Etobicoke. This spending is not indicative of service levels. The application of best practices would not only save money but also provide all citizens with an equal and better quality of service.

In regard to health services, which include programs that focus on health promotion, we see huge inequities in the per capita expenditures. East York spends almost double that spent in Etobicoke and Scarborough. Does this mean the citizens of Etobicoke and Scarborough deserve less attention in this area? And if these services appear common in the municipalities, how well is East York managing their spending? We do not need six separate health administrative structures to promote health and prevent diseases. It's time to identify the effective and low-cost practices, implement them, and equalize services across the board. The only way to achieve this is through amalgamation.

We all feel very strongly about our access to recreational and cultural facilities. Let's remind ourselves that these parks and recreation centres are unique not only to the community or the municipality but to all the people in Toronto. Why is the per capita spending for parks and

recreation in Etobicoke almost double that in Scarborough? Are we not putting the citizens of Scarborough at a disadvantage? Perhaps Scarborough's recreational services are in place and we would be able to incorporate their practices across the GTA. This thought is the light at the end of the tunnel, but amalgamation must first occur before we can implement these improvements in services and address waste in the existing system.

Many citizens value their access to libraries, especially as a vital source of information and knowledge for our young people. We again see inefficiencies and inequities as a result of government structure. Why are expenditures in North York almost twice those in York and East York? Are the citizens of York and East York less worthy? The municipalities are so out of touch with public needs that they cannot even agree on something as simple as a universally accessible Metro-wide library system with one card: a very simple concept, one that would not only improve the current services but save money. This typical approach to providing services and managing our hard-earned tax dollars exists in our current structure. It is time for change.

Another area of great concern to many citizens is the handling of the smoking legislation in the various municipalities. We are all aware of the introduction of legislation for restriction and/or elimination of smoking in public restaurants and bars. It is common knowledge that smoking is the greatest cause of preventable illness, disability and premature death in Canada. It is also a massive drain on the health care system in terms of capital resources and people. The attempt to legislate smoking is another example of how the current structure completely fails to provide for the wellbeing of the people of Toronto. The delays and softening of the legislation are not the sign of a responsive government.

Some believe the existing government is accessible and responsive. Let's talk about accessibility. Who gained access to our local government during the attempted implementation of this legislation? Not me and not the voice of the people. It was the Ontario Restaurant Association that successfully lobbied against the law and its effective date. By the way, the Ontario Restaurant Association receives funding from the tobacco industry. Is this a surprise to anyone? Why did the Ontario Restaurant Association lobby against the bills? Do they believe a little tobacco with their customer's entrée adds to the experience, or was it because they enjoy spending extra money on maintaining smoking sections? No. It is because smokers walked across the street to give somebody else their business. Our municipalities failed because our cities, and the structure that comes with them, could not develop a consistent plan to address this issue.

The impact of restructuring and deferral of the smoking legislation will never be known, but our mayors can be proud that their surrendering to political pressures due to municipal boundaries will encourage smokers to continue their hazardous habit and continue to expose non-smokers to secondhand smoke. It is also a proven fact that the outcome of the municipalities' actions continues to encourage many of our young people to start smoking, thinking this is a cool thing adults do in bars

and restaurants. Is this how our municipalities work together for the better wellbeing of the people? These actions display a disregard towards people's health and, once again, a disregard towards the fiscal concerns in the area of health care.

I would like to also comment on the municipal referendum campaigns. This is just another example of the inconsistency and mismanagement that exist in our current system. Six municipalities, six different referendums, each varying in cost — some even failing to promote voter secrecy, others soliciting deceased voters' opinions. Again, my hard-earned tax dollars at work. For these reasons, I and many others will not participate in this process, and I urge you not to be influenced by the outcome.

If the municipalities were responsible and believed in referendums, they should have had a referendum on the referendum. Many people disagree with the idea entirely, outside of the fact that it was poorly planned and will not clearly voice the opinions of the people.

In closing, I believe amalgamation will inevitably decrease the municipal bureaucracy and lower costs for services. We will realize cost savings through efficiencies and the elimination of duplication while maintaining or improving existing services. It is good for business, it is a good start in creating an environment for job growth and, most important, it is good for the people.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing before us today. Unfortunately, we've run out of time.

#### ONTARIO PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE YOUTH ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to ask our next speaker, Waled Soliman, from the PC youth association, to come forward. Good morning, Mr Soliman.

**Mr Waled Soliman:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Waled Soliman and I am the president of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Youth Association. Today, Ontarians, specifically Torontonians, Etobikokians, Scarboroughians, a couple of Yorkians — sometimes I think it might be better to amalgamate simply because "Torontonians" sounds kind of neat — are faced with an important decision about their future.

Let's start off with a widely accepted and understood premise: The status quo is unacceptable. That's not something that only I would say. "I've done a lot of soul-searching lately and have come to the conclusion that it is ridiculous for us to have six fire departments, six works departments and six of everything else in Metro." That was actually Mel Lastman, and I hope he can do some soul-searching some time soon also and come onside with this bill.

He also said on March 12, 1984: "We look like idiots not amalgamating. Why do we have all these works departments and health departments, all this overlapping? Why do we need all these treasury departments and building departments? The work could all be done out of one big office." Mel Lastman, mayor of North York, Toronto Star, March 12, 1984.

"York and East York are the poor cousins in Metro's six-member family and should amalgamate for their mutual benefit," York alderman Mike Colle says. Mike

Colle said yesterday an organization he's chairman of, Reform York, has been trying to raise the issue of amalgamation for the past eight months." Toronto Sun, April 8, 1982.

"Colle thinks the borough should be disbanded because 'We find our taxes are the highest in Metro and our services, if not the worst, are among the worst in Metro.'" Globe and Mail, April 10, 1982.

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So it's not only me. I found it rather amusing yet telling of our political times to watch the various mayors get together at early wind of this new change for a conference on how to reform our municipal system in Toronto and its surrounding cities. Instead of flatly admitting the failures of our current system, its inefficiencies and lack of vision, they came up with a half-thought-out plan to significantly cut the number of politicians in Toronto. I must say I was sincerely proud to see that the catalyst, the Ontario government, did not succumb. Where, my friends, had these glorious ideas of municipal reform been for so long? Was the system of municipal government in Toronto so lacking in the essential attributes of good government that not once had it seriously considered its future as a city serving people?

What I am stating is quite simple. Inefficient municipal government in Toronto must be stopped; not streamlined, but stopped. No, I do not believe that we should spend years studying the obvious. It doesn't need a Somalia-inquiry-type government study to figure out that fewer politicians will save money; that streamlined government where garbage collection, roads and planning departments are consolidated will be more efficient. But being politicians, you all recognize, even in times of fiscal restraint, that savings are not the only factor that constituents desire. Efficiency, local representation, the ability to live a more comfortable life are all essential and important attributes.

I'm only a second-year political science student living at home and making a meagre living — in fact some of you have been in the political game much longer than my 19 years — but I am sure that, whichever side of this table you sit on, you shall agree with me that the 50 or so politicians who shall be unemployed after Bill 103 will not be missed. Some may throw a going-away party, but I am confident that many will find their constituents doing that for them.

The constituents of the new Toronto will quickly learn that they can do better for less. Citizens have realized and shall continue to be reminded that the Metro regional level of government currently already administers 72% of the operating budget and has consolidated major services such as police, public transit, social services and ambulance services. The six cities, as you all well know, administer only 28% of the budget for services that could so easily be merged and provided more efficiently at less cost. How much less? Well, if the figures of the reputable KPMG are correct, almost \$1 billion up front and by \$300 million from then on. Clearly, ladies and gentlemen, a unified Toronto is better for all of us from a fiscal perspective, a comfort perspective, an efficiency perspective or, of course, an economic development perspective.

So what is all the fuss about? This morning I spoke to about 500 students at an amalgamation meeting from Leaside secondary school in East York. The message they gave me was one of confusion: Efficiency, saving money, living a more comfortable life we agree with, but what is the opposition doing at Queen's Park? What is John Sewell ranting and raving about in his civilly disobedient and immature way? What are Mayors Hall, Lastman etc — I don't even know all the names of all the mayors — trying to achieve?

Ladies and gentlemen, some will tell you this is about democracy. We hear this from Dalton McGuinty and Howard Hampton almost every day in the Legislature these days. But I'd like to read to them also a couple of quotes. They're going on about how we have to hold this referendum and recognize a referendum where ballots have been thrown out behind garbage cans and today we hear that there were ballots sent to Stoney Creek.

"The issue of referenda is simply an opportunity for the majority government to move the decision-making and the difficult part of governance on to a very simply asked question through the process of referenda, and that is something the Liberal Party cannot support." Sandra Pupatello, Liberal MPP, Windsor-Sandwich, December 4, 1996, in this room.

That is not where it ends, actually. I'm just trying to present the hypocrisy. Hamilton East Liberal MPP Dominic Agostino and Hamilton Centre MPP David Christopherson said that referendums are not useful in sorting out municipal restructuring. Again, it's not me. It is an interesting thing.

People are not being fooled. Citizens of this province are not being fooled. Mel Lastman sometimes does, sometimes doesn't; sometimes just may support a unified Toronto and other days he doesn't support it. A referendum on the issue: He supports it some days; other days he doesn't.

In Politics 100 — I take it Mondays and Wednesdays at the University of Toronto — we're taught that this is a classic example of a political term we call "opportunism." It's a sick political tool used to advance the politician against all odds, even constituents, people, citizens. I'm looking forward to the day Bill 103 becomes law; the day Toronto becomes a strong, unified city and the tyranny of opportunistic municipal politicians and demagogues comes to an end.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** How much time is remaining?

**The Vice-Chair:** Less than two minutes.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Soliman, it's good to have you here.

**Mr Soliman:** My pleasure.

**Mr Marchese:** It's nice to hear from people like you. We've heard a number of young people who have come, and they share the same view you do. I'm interested, in fact fascinated, by your particular views.

You've quoted a number of people. I want to quote somebody else to you to see what your response is to that. In Fergus, Ontario, in 1994, a friend of yours said this: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride? I

disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities." That was Mike Harris.

**Mr Soliman:** I actually read that this morning in the Toronto Star. That was an interesting quote. What I think we've got to take a look at is the situation we are facing right here in this city, in Toronto. We've got several cities where there are inefficiencies. These inefficiencies are not ones that were brought up by Mike Harris, not ones that were brought up by the government, but just at the simplest wind of a problem the six mayors got together and said, "We recognize there's a problem, and we're going to fix it before we lose our jobs."

**Mr Marchese:** I've got another question for you. We have only two minutes. Mr Soliman, on this issue you're saying that the Premier meant it only for Fergus, but for Metro it's a different story, caused by the mayors, so this quote really doesn't apply to Metro. Is that what you're saying?

**Mr Soliman:** Actually, I didn't say anything of that sort. But if I may, the difference between the quote you're using there and the situation we're having here in Toronto is one that's — and I'll just stress it again very simply — here in Toronto, there's a recognized problem that is being addressed, not streamlined, not just shaved, but cut and done properly so that we can have more efficient government. That's something I know you guys certainly don't believe in.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Soliman. We've run out of time.

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TERESA HIBBERT

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Teresa Hibbert. Good morning, Ms Hibbert, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Teresa Hibbert:** Mr Chairman and committee members, my name is Teresa Hibbert. When these hearings were in their initial stages, Mr Leach, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, remarked that he did not need to hear all of the presentations, because the speakers were repeating the same things. I would like to take a moment here and say that, on the contrary, Mr Leach, these reports have shown a high level of originality and have been well researched and eloquently presented. The arguments have been lucid and sound, in contrast, I might add, to some arguments I've heard put forward by certain Conservative members of this committee. Mr Leach has since stated that as a result of these hearings modifications will have to be made to Bill 103. Could it be that he is now actually listening?

The context of my critique of Bill 103 is that of the social situation of women and the ways in which this bill affects women's lives. The main points I wish to focus on are, first, the nature of the prevailing philosophy inherent in this legislation, and second, the harmful consequences this ideology has on women.

Before I elaborate on these aspects, I will just state briefly that the changes proposed by Bill 103 for Metro Toronto and the municipalities cannot be seen in isolation and are interconnected in terms of the destruction of local government, the dismantling of local control of schools

and the downloading of municipal services and essential social services on to cities.

The most insidious and lamentable section of Bill 103 is that dealing with trustees and the transition team. The three trustees, along with the transition team, have been accorded powers that transcend the law, since their decisions "are final and shall not be reviewed...by a court." This is unconstitutional. Further, it is increasingly evident that the concept of a megacity is a smokescreen for the privatization of the province, and the transparency of this government's relationship with mega-corporations is blatantly apparent.

Regarding the philosophy expressed in Bill 103, I would argue that it is a philosophy based on dishonesty, deceit and manipulation. Witness Mr Harris's remarks when confronted by the taxpayers' federation before his election in 1995. He stated at that time that local government would not be eliminated; and further, that ordinary citizens would not find financial matters and public policy at the provincial level too difficult to understand and voice their opinion on through a referendum. Yet Bill 103 will dismantle government at the local level.

Regarding the referendum, we have been told that regardless of citizens' opinions, the government will continue with its agenda and ignore the people. How is this a democracy? The essence of democracy is government by the people and for the people. The hypocrisy and contradictions inherent in this government's philosophy abound at every turn.

The Conservative Party's document entitled *Your Ontario, Your Choice* — excuse me for feeling nauseated — states, "The Ontario government is firmly committed to using the referendum as a tool of increased accountability and improved public participation in the decision-making process." Yet here again we have been told that our expressions of dissent will be dismissed and that our public participation will stand for naught. Is this not contradictory? Is this not hypocritical? Are these not lies?

Bill 103 reflects the principles of demagoguery and not those of democracy, because Mr Leach will have sole authority over all municipal decisions since not only is he the appointee of the three trustees who will oversee the city, but these trustees are answerable only to him. This is a philosophy of dictatorship, and we need not point our finger at so-called Third World countries as if those places were the only homes of tyrants and despots. Bill 103 firmly entrenches despots in our own backyard.

When considering the effects of this ideology on women in particular, the reason my focus of analysis is on women is because as a group women are most reliant on and in greater need of essential social and community services than any other group. When these services are denied, women have nowhere to turn, and consequently suffer the most. In particular, women of African origin and women of colour are extremely vulnerable because they suffer a double oppression, that of racial inequality and gender discrimination. Since women are still regarded as being primarily responsible for child care, children's loss is automatically linked to that of women. The philosophy, therefore, of Bill 103 is particularly cruel and vicious, because it targets and attacks the most vulnerable group in society.

The full effects of Bill 103 proposals on women in particular are too numerous to be enumerated here. These effects, however, have been fully detailed by Women Plan Toronto, and I include in my brief a copy of their statement. See addendum 1. Suffice it to say that women have worked tirelessly to create services such as child care and all manner of community programs, including those affecting health and safety. Bill 103 seriously jeopardizes all these programs which women in particular need because of its downloading on municipalities of housing for low-income people, long-term care for the elderly, employment equity programs and in particular programs to prevent violence against women. Thus, women's rights are being systematically eroded by this legislation, and the philosophy of this government can clearly be seen as one of contempt towards women.

This contemptuous attitude is mirrored in a report on violence against women, a report which the provincial government was supposed to release but refused to do. This report, entitled Framework for Action on the Prevention of Violence Against Women in Ontario, was completed in November 1996 by McGuire Associates, who were hired in conjunction with the minister responsible for women's issues. In December 1996, at the request of the minister responsible for women's issues, a forum composed of women's groups was held at George Brown College to respond to this report.

Panellists, however, did not receive copies of the report but only a four-page excerpt of the executive summary, and this only one day before the forum. As a result, panellists and participants questioned the entire aspect of this report and consequently they, along with those others who managed to see the report, wrote a synopsis outlining the problems inherent in this document. I have included in my brief a copy of this synopsis. Please see addendum 2. In general, this report is an attack on services for women and proposes severe budget cuts to shelters and to rape crisis centres. As many women have observed, this is a report which is dismantling over 25 years of women's struggle for freedom from violence.

I am here before this committee to remind the government of the terrible price women and children will pay if services for women are eliminated or radically altered. Legislators and law enforcement agencies should be working to eliminate abuse and violence against women and introduce legislation that creates a safe and positive environment for women. Instead, to its shame, this Conservative government, with its introduction of Bill 103, is placing women in serious jeopardy. Women have fought hard for the right to vote and make decisions that affect our lives, but sad to say, the Ontario government, with Bill 103, has walked roughshod over that struggle by denying women today those hard-won rights.

It is timely here to recall the words of Charles Fourier, a sociologist and an early advocate of women's equality. He said: "The change in a historical epoch can always be determined by the progress of women toward freedom, because in the relation of woman to man, of the weak to the strong, the victory of human nature over brutality is most evident. The degree of emancipation of women is the natural measure of general emancipation." I remind the government that this was written in 1841, and how

they have indeed, with this legislation, turned back the clock regarding women's human rights.

I therefore demand that the government of Ontario withdraw totally, and not just amend, all proposals of Bill 103. As our own Jane Jacobs so aptly stated, "It cannot be improved and therefore it must be discarded," on the grounds that it is an unconscionable and tyrannical piece of legislation and as such it violates the basic democratic rights of all citizens. As Jane Jacobs has further stated: "We are up against heavy stakes — the future of our city and society, and in our struggle, we have to have a combination of high hearts and unyielding wills. These are our resources and we will win."

I ask Mr Harris and Mr Leach, along with the women of all Metro Toronto who signed the Women's Declaration Against Amalgamation and for Local Democracy, what part of "no" don't you understand?

I end with a sobering thought. As the Rape Crisis Centre of Peel has reminded us, "Cuts cost women's lives."

I now ask for one minute of silence so that the committee may reflect on the message they have heard during these hearings and in particular to remember the women who have died through acts of violence and those who will probably die if safety programs and violence prevention programs are jeopardized as a result of the proposals advocated in Bill 103. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Hibbert. You have timed that absolutely right. It's 10 minutes. Thank you very much for appearing before us.

**Ms Hibbert:** I did ask for one minute's silence.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry. We have only the 10 minutes for each person making a presentation here today.

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### DENNIS FOTINOS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Dennis Fotinos, the Metro councillor. Good morning and welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Mr Dennis Fotinos:** Good morning, Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Dennis Fotinos. I am a Metro councillor in Metropolitan Toronto, representing the city of Toronto wards 11 and 12. This is my second term in office.

I support one strong, unified city of Toronto governed by directly elected councillors and a directly elected mayor. In addition to rationalizing municipal service delivery and permitting for greater efficiencies and revenue generation, unification will provide for better government accountability than the models presented in the Golden report or in the mayors' proposal, Change for the Better, respectively.

While your government is to be commended for recognizing this, the previous Liberal government of David Peterson, with Bernard Grandmaître as Minister of Municipal Affairs, must also be acknowledged for recognizing the need for accountable government and establishing a directly elected council to manage the affairs of 2.3 million people in Metropolitan Toronto. Bill 103 recognizes and builds on the reforms initiated by the Liberals, and with some amendments it will produce a strong,

vibrant municipality run by democratically elected, accountable representatives of the people.

Tip O'Neil, the former Speaker of the US House of Representatives, said, "All politics is local." I agree. Politicians may be elected for their positions on the bigger issues but they are defeated for their mishandling of local issues. The public may not be totally informed about the complexities of the larger issues but they sure know the details of local matters, and as you all know, they hold politicians accountable for these issues. The best way to ensure that people become better informed about the bigger issues and about their respective representatives' positions on these issues is to allow for elections. When politicians have to defend their record in elections they become much more accountable.

Both the Golden report and the mayors' report dismissed the need for accountability at the level of government managing the services delivered to 2.3 million people. One can only surmise that the Golden commission arrived at this conclusion due to the lack of any political representation on their panel, and the mayors — some might suggest self-interest; I leave that to you to determine why they would do that. For even if all other reasons are dismissed, it defies logic to insist, as the mayors and Golden do, on having accountability for local councils which approve budgets in the order of \$500 million and then recommending substantially diminished accountability for a council responsible for a \$4-billion budget.

As Jane Jacobs, one of the heroes of the anti-unification side, noted, mistakes made by larger bureaucracies are bigger than those made by smaller bureaucracies. While I don't agree with this statement entirely, it sure makes the case for the necessity of directly elected, accountable representatives who will ensure that the public interest is preserved. The Liberals, as I said earlier, recognized this need for accountable government in 1988, and Bill 103 supports the need for strong, accountable government and builds on that.

Bill 103 supports the need for a government and a council whose size will make it more accountable by making it less susceptible to the influence of unscrupulous interest groups and individuals, the kind of behaviour, regrettably, we have witnessed at Etobicoke city council and York city council in the past while — two of the councils, I might suggest, that the mayors and Ms Golden would have us preserve.

However, while I believe that Bill 103 will produce an accountable, strong city council, I also believe some amendments are necessary, and I'll list those amendments for you.

(1) I believe the community councils mentioned by the minister in his press release after Bill 103 was introduced must be included in the final draft of Bill 103 and they ought to be given very defined statutory powers on local issues. Allow them to deal with the local issues and make sure that they have the authority and power to do that and that they're not just paper tigers.

(2) The proposed transition team should be comprised of elected representatives from the existing six local councils and Metro council. If you're going to insist on accountability in the new council, then the body that

determines the role of that new council should also be made up of accountable people, people who have been duly elected by the citizens of this municipality.

(3) While the government should enact Bill 103, you should delay implementation until January 1, 1999, or until such time as the transition team, comprised of elected representatives, has had an opportunity to consult the public on the details of the new council. That transition team should go out and hold meetings on the details. I think you have the broad strokes right on amalgamation, on one city, but I think some of the short strokes still have to be ironed out.

(4) I think the board of trustees should become an advisory panel to the minister with no powers to override duly elected representatives of the people. If the minister feels this is necessary, that the council should be overridden, then he should do it himself. He is accountable; he will have to answer for his decisions. The trustees should not have that authority over council, and while it may be very restricted and may be very limited in nature, again it flies in the face of accountability and the thrust of the new council.

(5) As a member from the city of Toronto I would hope this government would scrap actual value assessment.

(6) I would hope that this government would reconsider some of the transfer of financial responsibilities, or what's known as downloading, to the municipalities. Give the new city a chance. The downloading and AVA, I think, will not allow the new city to survive.

I have some suggestions as to how I think you can transfer responsibilities. You might consider, for instance, taking over actual classroom education and education in outlying municipalities to remain in control of the administration of education. That principle should also apply in social services: Take over the cost of the welfare cheque but allow the municipalities to handle the administration.

If municipalities want a say in what is happening in their municipality with respect to social services and education, and I think they do, they should also have to pay for that. It's not fair to suggest that the province should take over the entire cost. Some of that should be borne by the municipalities. I think a scenario of that nature, given the discussions I've had with our staff at Metro, would provide for a revenue-neutral solution, and more important, would provide for a financial tradeoff that would make sense in the long run when the welfare situation may become more volatile again.

In conclusion, I'd like to say for the sake of Toronto, pass Bill 103 with the necessary amendments. Unify the six municipalities but take the time to get it right. Thank you.

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** Thank you very much, Mr Fotinos, in particular for your helpful suggestions. I want to follow up on one of your comments in that regard: community councils. Can you give us a little more detail as to your thoughts on just what the structure of the community councils should be, what their authority should be, what subject matter and how it all plays into the total picture?

**Mr Fotinos:** There are issues that are very clearly local in nature: traffic mazes in neighbourhoods; Stop

signs on city streets; front-yard parking; building permits with respect to very local issues — the size of a garage for example, the size of an extension to a home. Those kinds of issues are very local in nature and we would all concede that the people best able to handle those issues are probably the communities and their respective representatives. Those are probably not the kinds of issues that should take up lengthy debate at a council that would be handling a budget in the order of \$6 billion.

Those kinds of responsibilities should not only be assigned to the local councils but local community councils should have statutory powers to deal with those issues. If there is an issue which is very germane to the citizens of a community in former Etobicoke or Weston or any one of those neighbourhoods in Etobicoke, or Forest Hill or Cedarvale in York and the city of Toronto, then I don't think communities in other parts of the larger city should really be able to delay or somehow alter significantly those issues.

When some of those issues begin to interact with the broader good, for example, when road closures or traffic mazes begin to impact on the flow of arterial roads, that is the kind of thing that has to come out to the larger council to be dealt with on a larger basis.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale):** Councillor Fotinos, many of the critics have gone after Metro council, of which I've not been a great fan in the past on some issues.

**Mr Fotinos:** I know that.

**Mr Hastings:** Some of you have sat down and put your heads together to try to figure out how this new amalgamated city council could work effectively. I had a breakfast meeting with Councillor Griffin this morning and she was suggesting we should look at moving the date of actual taking of office from January 1 to March or April 1, concurrent with the old councils to deal with a number of procedural and mechanical issues and make it a much smoother transition.

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Specifically she was most concerned about having the CAO of the new city appointed by the new council, exclusive of the transition team, because she said if you're going to have a smooth transition, to get things going you need a CAO whose council has a tremendous trust in that individual. Your comments?

**Mr Fotinos:** Some of those suggestions may be valid; they may not be. I personally think one of the strong points of a unified city is that it's simple and easy to understand for people. I think that kind of process may be a little convoluted. More important, rather than that suggestion coming from Councillor Griffin, I would rather have that detailed suggestion come out of consultations with the public.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, we've exceeded our time. Thank you very much for appearing here today.

#### COMMUNITY HOUSING SECURITY ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to now call on Donald Campbell, the chief coordinator of the Community Housing Security Association. Good morning, Mr Campbell. Welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Mr Donald Campbell:** I'm not sure whether to give presentation A or presentation B. Today I'm a schizophrenic as I appear before you because I feel very passionately about the future of this city, as we all do. I think we should remember that we all feel passionately in this city and should respect each other's points of view.

I want to say briefly what I think the new city of Toronto should look like, which is not sensational stuff; it's technical and administrative. Most of this I shall follow up in a written presentation next week. I promise that. I speak from my own experience as someone who has worked in social policing for six years in the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority before I was purged from the authority at the end of May.

I found that I was basically all by myself in the Wild West of Weston-Bellevue, which is Lawrence Avenue and Weston Road. Police services there were almost non-existent. I hardly ever saw a police officer on patrol in terms of walking the beat. The division I was in was so short-staffed that another division had to step in and we never knew which police division would be operating.

Also, my experience in terms of MTHA is that it's one big, bureaucratic mess. They currently have two security zones, but then they have four district security advisers, six district housing managers, and then they have private management on top of that.

I'm not going to present a brief here today, whether one should have a privatization situation or not in something like the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, but I can tell you folks that what is going on in the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority is a mess.

It is interesting to note that of the six murders that have occurred so far in Metropolitan Toronto this year, three have occurred in MTHA. It is interesting that the murders that occurred were, first, at north Regent Park. I'm going to say something which is very much rumour and hearsay but I think this will illustrate why I believe that when Al Leach recently said there should be a review of agency operations, indeed there should be. It should be thorough, it should be independent and, in my opinion, it should be done by you folks. It should be done by members of the legislative committee because this is a problem that has gone on for years and years.

This piece of unsubstantiated rumour is that in that same authority an in-house security services officer, who's also reputed to have been found in a crack house, is apparently a cocaine addict, was found in one of the stairwells at north Regent Park having group sex with some other females. There is another in-house security officer who allegedly is a heroin addict and his addiction spills over into the community where he apparently works.

I can tell you there are about 50 different categories of problems in Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority which have not been dealt with, notwithstanding the best intentions of all you honourable members of the Legislature. All I can say is that because I had the nerve to speak up for the junior guys back last February — I became the head of the Community Housing Security Association and wrote the minister, Al Leach, that April 2 submission warning of the problems almost a year ago — it was for these reasons that I have been unem-

ployed since May 31, and not only have I lost approximately \$25,000 in income so far, but it has also been \$25,000 in expenses.

So, ladies and gentlemen — murders in Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority and Don Campbell possibly being out on the street in another two or three months, \$25,000 outstanding in Mastercard to pay for this democratic effort, I've highlighted a few points just to get your attention.

I'll be sending another transcript regarding unfair labour practices at MTHA which all members of the Legislature will get next week. All members of the Legislature have already got three packages from me. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Take my word for it. Before OHC says, "Yes, we are going to approve your budget," take a close look at what's going on in the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority. As I've already forewarned the government, this is a Somalia-type scandal that is on the verge of emerging, and better the government root it out than it be rooted out by the media, which I have not yet approached despite being advised by a member of the opposition and a member of the government a year ago. I'm not a sensationalist.

That's all I have to say. I deliver on my promises. I put my money where my mouth is and that is why I've been a threat to the bureaucratic tyrants and despots of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority.

**Mr Sergio:** You don't have anything in writing for us, do you?

**Mr Campbell:** Not today, and you should be thankful for such small mercies. You shall be receiving the transcript of the June 26 conference after I made about several thousand minute changes; I'm a Virgo and I like perfection in transcripts. You will get this labour of passion and concern next week, so that will be package number four. I estimate there are probably about another eight packages to follow if we don't go the legislative committee route.

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you for coming down and making a presentation to our committee, Mr Campbell. I can sense the amount of frustration you're trying to get rid of. I can sense that and I'm sure there are a number of problems associated with the management of MTHA.

Last year Mr Leach, the minister, wanted to get rid of all 84,000 units, whatever we have in Metro here. Evidently that is proving to be a very hot item the government and the minister can't handle. They want to turn it over to the local municipality now, with all the problems. Mr Leach said that the cost of repairing those units is too excessive. How do you feel now that the provincial government wants to dump all the social housing on to the local municipality? Is the problem going to go away?

**Mr Campbell:** I think it's quite evident I am not a fence-sitter, anything but a fence-sitter, but on the other hand, there is more than one valid point of view on these issues. These are very complex issues, and I believe that when there are various differing points of views, quite often if you not only talk but also listen, you can come out with a consensus that works.

I don't think that the most important problem is whether, for example, the Metropolitan Toronto Housing

Authority ends up having a chair eventually who is a municipal appointee or provincial. I don't think that's the problem. I think the problem is that you first have to root out completely the mess you currently have in MTHA, whether you keep MTHA or whether you pass it on to, let's say, an amalgamated city of Toronto on January 1.

**Mr Sergio:** What do you think should be done? Can you give us, especially members of the government, some idea as to what can and should be done to clean up the mess you have mentioned there? I believe there is a mess in there.

**Mr Campbell:** Modest I'm not; I used to be shy a long time ago, but basically appoint me chair of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority and I can guarantee you one thing. I have paid my dues. I have demonstrated that I have integrity, that I have courage and that I'm even willing to be tossed out on the street. I'm behind in my mortgage payments. I've put everything on the line. I've exhausted my RRSPs. Put me on the board, if not as chair — I don't have to be the chief honcho — but I'll tell you what, you put me on the board in any capacity and there isn't going to be any more nonsense going on in the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority. But I would ask you that also someone pay me so that I can do this job, even if it's in a consultant or an investigative capacity, because quite frankly right now unemployment insurance runs out in a few weeks and Canada Trust is going to be sending all my Mastercard payments to collection. These are practical matters.

I can answer that more in the future, the sort of things that can be done. I have many proposals to that effect. The Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority is an excellent institution run by about the worst bunch of scoundrels you'll find in the whole province of Ontario.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Campbell, for appearing before us today.

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#### WOODGREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE OF TORONTO

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like now to call on Brian Smith of the WoodGreen Community Centre.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Jakobek isn't —

**The Vice-Chair:** He isn't here yet.

**Mr Brian Smith:** I'll stand in for him.

**The Vice-Chair:** Good morning, Mr Smith, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Smith:** My name is Brian Smith. I'm the president of WoodGreen Community Centre of Toronto, which is a multiservice organization serving the east end of the city of Toronto.

WoodGreen Community Centre has been a partner in providing services and building neighbourhood capacity for 60 years in east Toronto and specifically in Riverdale. During those years the demographics of the community have changed dramatically, but the spirit and the care for the community among the residents has flourished.

Is this unique for Toronto or the other cities that make up Metropolitan Toronto? Having been born in Toronto, my experience has shown me that there are many communities which are equally cared for by their residents. It

is the neighbour to neighbour which adds the life that no planning document or decree can create. Our present envied status as a great city to live where neighbourhoods flourish needs to be ensured in any proposed changes.

The fundamental question must be asked: Will the changes proposed in Bill 103 threaten or enhance the strength of the neighbourhood? The existing form of government with all its flaws allows and encourages neighbourhoods, and this is of extreme importance. The neighbourhood is the home where the family lives. The neighbourhood is also where there are issues, neighbours who perhaps don't live up to our standards, where there is perhaps abuse, but is also the place where neighbours plant flowers in gardens and improve their local community, and it provides the environment for the growing children which either offset or enhance family life.

Similarly, the neighbourhood where the need for housing repair or renewal goes unheeded or where municipal housekeeping or public safety are neglected or where residents and city administration work together to improve conditions provides the community environment which will enhance citizenship.

The quality of the neighbourhood life in both its physical and social aspects is therefore of vital concern to individuals, families and communities. This is the priority for WoodGreen and our community. These should be the criteria which you, who are entrusted with the health and prosperity of Ontario, should measure any changes against.

It is not good enough to take the expedient way out. You must get it right. Too much depends on this decision to cross your fingers and hope. Families and children depend upon your decision. A lot has been said in the past few days about child poverty and the federal response. However, I would suggest, it is at the level of the neighbourhood that this gets lived. It is equally important if we are to reduce child poverty, by ensuring the quality of the communities we create, where alienation does not become the benchmark as measured by the length of the lineup at the food banks or the hostel or the number of people begging or sleeping on the street.

We have taken too easily to accepting these standards as reflected so pervasively by the media in the cities of the United States. This standard is not good enough.

Your present proposal gives no encouragement that the strength of neighbourhoods, and the families and citizens who live there, have more physical and social wellbeing. There is a body of knowledge that says there are limits to the size of a city if the goal is to create an entity which operates efficiently and allows and encourages its citizens to have an active role in its governance. It is hard to believe you can think that creating a municipal government that would be larger than most provinces in Canada will somehow achieve these goals of a healthy and safe place for our children to live.

Finally, a few words about the proposed cost-sharing proposals that have been put forward and go hand in hand with any municipal structural changes. The proposed changes do not accomplish the stated objective of greater disentanglement between the two levels of government. Also, the appropriateness of the shifts must be questioned. There are two questions which appear to

be confused: (1) which level of government is able to deliver the service; (2) which level of government should pay for the service.

The first question should be answered on the basis of customer service and efficiency, and the second on the basis of whether this service should be funded through a broader shared income tax or through a focused and less geared-to-ability-to-pay property tax.

As an experienced deliverer of services, WoodGreen would recommend that those services that relate to the basic needs of food, shelter and health be the responsibility of the provincial government, and those costs related to the operation and infrastructure of the municipalities be funded through the property taxes. However, this should not be used as the criterion for delivery, where closer to the customer should be the preferred delivery mechanism.

Over the last few weeks you have been engaged in a debate, and we must be able to move beyond the political rhetoric and positions. Our concerns are twofold: (1) Keep the size of the municipal entity at a maximum of one million people to ensure efficiency, while keeping it at a scale where there can be a reasonable hope that citizens can be engaged and neighbourhoods can flourish. (2) Review your realignment of financial responsibilities placed on municipalities to keep those costs that ensure basic needs of the individual at the provincial level and those costs that relate directly to city life the responsibility of the municipalities. Where these municipal services cross municipal boundaries, larger, shared, responsible entities, which should include the larger GTA, can be created to provide the service.

To conclude, I'd like to refer to Peter Drucker, a well-known management consultant. Peter Drucker, in talking about effective leadership, tells us that efficiency is doing things right, but effectiveness is doing the right thing. We are asking you to do the right thing and make the changes required in this legislation to ensure our neighbourhoods flourish, because healthy neighbourhoods ensure healthy cities.

**Ms Marilyn Churley (Riverdale):** Thanks for coming down, Brian, and giving your thoughtful presentation. I just want to ask you — we come from the same area of Toronto — your view on the larger issue as well, the connection between the amalgamation and the downloading. There are those who say that there is no connection. I beg to differ. There are lots of connections, and I wonder if you have a comment on that.

**Mr Smith:** Certainly I would think that for the services, especially related to welfare, social assistance, some of the long-term care, the housing, there needs to be consistent funding across the entire province. It may be more effective to be delivered through a municipal infrastructure, but I believe that the way to ensure equity at these most basic service levels for our fellow residents in our communities, whether they be in large centres like Toronto or in small municipalities, should be the responsibility of the provincial government.

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**Ms Churley:** Other things are coming down the pipe, for instance, the removal of the business occupancy tax for big business, so that's got to be made up somewhere, and AVA which is really another form of MVA, and all

of these downloading things. Just from the work you do in the south part of Riverdale, do you have a concern that all these things are going to lead to higher taxes, more user fees? At WoodGreen, for instance, there are a lot of free services for seniors and poor children.

**Mr Smith:** Already we're looking at more downloading of services to communities. Whether the local property tax base can afford those, there is much concern about that in our sector. I wouldn't see that the local municipality in the long run could bear those costs, especially when there are economic downturns in the local economy and a loss of the property tax base.

**Mr Marchese:** We've heard from about 200 people who have come here, very passionate about wanting to preserve local governments because they've argued that they're much more accountable, more responsive and attuned to communities and neighbourhoods and to the kinds of issues you've been raising.

The others argue, "We're not going to lose all of that," and the Toronto Star has argued that: "We're still going to have elected people. There will be 44 politicians. We're going to have community councils and neighbourhood councils. So why are you and others so worried about this?" What is your response to things like that?

**Mr Smith:** As I heard a previous speaker say, in terms of neighbourhood councils, their role and responsibilities certainly hasn't been defined, and whether they're just advisory bodies. I know a number of local cases where there are local issues and in many cases these are seniors who are concerned about these issues. They've been able to go to their local council and make representation. I see it as very difficult for these same individuals if we've created such a huge bureaucracy, that they would have the same ability to have impact and create local change.

**Mr Marchese:** There is a Mr Wendell Cox, who you may have heard of, who's done some research in this whole field, and one of the matters he raises is that "larger governments are more susceptible to special interests." This is so for a number of reasons. "First, special interests have the financial resources to hire professional advocates (such as lobbyists) to learn, understand and manipulate the rigid process of larger governments." It's one of the reasons he gives. I'm concerned about that because my sense is that people who have come here deputing are very worried about their inability to influence this much more powerful council.

We had the Urban Development Institute come here yesterday, very supportive of this particular bill; they think this is great for the economy, for themselves. They stated a worry which is of interest to me. They said: "We are concerned about the development and use of community councils and neighbourhood committees as contemplated" under the bill. "While the details have yet to be clarified, it is our understanding that community councils would consist of seven or eight wards, with each ward being represented by its elected councillor. These community councils would receive input from neighbourhood committees."

It is interesting that they are very worried about planning issues and they're worried about some of these few people — we don't even know what power they might have — who might give advice to these community

councils made up of politicians. They're worried about the influence they would have on planning issues. They, presumably, would like to get rid of even that modest voice that might be kept under this bill. What is your sense of that?

**Mr Smith:** I certainly would want to have local input. My concern is those groups would be better served if they are incorporated into smaller community councils, or actual municipal councils, and kept below sort of a million threshold in population so that at least it's within a size that people can go. I guess a lot of questions: Are these people elected? How do they get there? Are we creating more confusion to the individuals in the community in terms of bureaucracy? How many structures?

I think it would be simpler to have a smaller council that was elected and responsible for these decisions, where people can actually go and make representation, rather than to create a whole — it seems to be more entanglement rather than less to create these huge structures. But if it's a large bureaucracy we're talking about, then definitely that's better than nothing.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here today. I would like to thank those who have agreed to be rescheduled. We will stand recessed until 3:30.

*The committee recessed from 1156 to 1536.*

**The Vice-Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We are going to resume our hearing here.

#### LOW INCOME FAMILIES TOGETHER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to begin by asking Hilary MacKenzie of Low Income Families Together to come forward for a presentation. Good afternoon, Ms MacKenzie. Welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Ms Hilary MacKenzie:** Thank you. Low Income Families Together is an organization which is governed by low-income people and whose members are all low-income people. We work in community economic development, popular education and advocacy. The impact which Bill 103 will have on the low-income community has been discussed extensively by our members, board of directors and staff, and this brief provides a compendium of their points of view.

One very direct impact that was immediately obvious to us was that there would be virtually no access to participation in municipal politics for low-income people in the new Metro. It is already extremely difficult for low-income people to participate in municipal politics due to the time constraints and uncertainty that financial hardship forces on them. Now with far fewer wards, campaigns will be far more expensive.

A former president of our organization, Carol Anne Wright, a sole-support parent, woman of colour and resident of Regent Park, was a candidate for the mayoralty of Toronto two municipal elections ago. The financial resources for her campaign were minimal, but she had a very determined campaign team and, although she didn't win, she got a very respectable number of votes and brought a lot of low-income issues to the fore.

If the six cities are combined, no one will be able to run for office without a party or business connections behind them. Running for the mayoralty of Toronto will

be like running for the mayoralty of New York City. Only those who are affluent and/or well connected will be able to run for office and those who get elected will not be able to represent all their constituents effectively because the business interests or party which supported their campaign will expect to have favours returned.

Citizens' access to their local councillor is also being more or less halved. Currently, wards are small enough for councillors to know all the different neighbourhoods in their ward. When you visit a councillor's office, they immediately know the neighbourhood you are talking about. When you double the ward size, you sacrifice accessibility, accountability and efficiency.

The present government, which is so keen on the concept of flexibility in certain contexts, is promoting the growth of a bureaucracy which will inevitably be far more rigid than the current city administrations, leaving citizens with less ability to intervene.

The proposed neighbourhood committees will not ameliorate this situation in any way. They will not dispose of any significant resources, so they will have little power and, because they are not elected, they will not be accountable to citizens. Committee members will not be remunerated, so they will inevitably be composed of better-off homeowners who can afford to be involved in such a capacity. There will be no place where low-income people can take their concerns, as they have no obligation to respond as unelected appointees.

Metro-wide planning will also be very prejudicial to the interests of low-income communities. Fast and easy automobile access downtown will predominate in city planning, endangering the health of lower-income inner-city neighbourhoods for the convenience of suburban commuters. Traffic calming, encouraging bicycling, taking a holistic approach to neighbourhood safety are going to be a low priority for a suburban-dominated mega-council.

Currently the record of the city of Toronto in making it possible for citizens to have their say in what is going to happen in their neighbourhoods is not bad. Meetings to discuss changes are held at locations and times of day which make it possible for most citizens to attend. We are doubtful that a mega planning department will be so citizen-friendly.

With the changes in land use planning in Bill 20 and the weakening of environmental assessment in Bill 76, there is a greater likelihood than ever that health-endangering installations such as incinerators and highways will be dumped in low-income neighbourhoods. Who will protect such communities in the framework of a megacity where the planning department knows little about what makes specific communities tick? Their status will shrink in relation to the territory of their local councillor.

Actual value assessment will increase the regressive tax burden above all on low-income households, especially senior homeowners on fixed incomes, as well as renters. On average these low-income groups pay almost 6% of their income in property taxes while higher-income people only pay 3% of their income in property taxes.

The downloading of so many programs based on need, such as health and welfare, to property taxes which are inflexible and regressive and do not take any account of

income is neither a sane nor a sustainable alternative to our present system. It will pit children's development — bearing in mind that one in three children in the city of Toronto is dependent on social assistance — against the interests of small businesses and homeowners when there is a recession. What will happen to the dental plan and the drug benefit plan so essential to families on social assistance? What will happen to the assistive devices program which is so essential to people with disabilities?

Many of the services which are essential for low-income people to have any quality of life and for their children to have an equal chance will be competing for very scarce funds if these measures are passed. The amount which municipalities are to contribute to child care has been multiplied. Many families will be denied, making it impossible for them to go out to work or attend training programs, thus increasing unemployment.

With so many essential services competing for scarce dollars, we are likely to see higher user fees, the loss of income supplements which help to prevent high staff turnover in this extremely low-waged sector, the elimination of programs for children with special needs, as well as some families being forced to resort to informal, unlicensed child-minding rather than child care with proper facilities which can stimulate children's development.

Recreation programs are also likely to suffer considerable cutbacks in the downloading of costs to the municipalities. Currently the use of libraries and recreation centres is free in Toronto. They are extremely important for low-income families as they have no other options. Mr Leach has described charging for such services as an opportunity for municipalities. It does not represent an opportunity for low-income people. It represents the denial of services. They can hardly afford to pay the rent and buy food, so going for a swim or borrowing books would become an unaffordable luxury.

The other alternative that municipalities will have will be to cut back services. Do we really want the recreation centres and libraries we have built to remain closed while our kids hang out on the streets or stay home and watch TV?

Housing, one of the most basic determinants of health, safety and stability, is severely threatened by these changes. Metro housing, Cityhome, non-profits and co-ops are being downloaded to the municipalities, which do not have the administrative capacity nor the funding to cope. It is feared, justifiably, that this will lead to inadequate maintenance and the deterioration of the already vastly inadequate supply of affordable housing in Toronto. The loss of access to social housing, combined with the high unemployment rate and reduced shelter allowance, leads to ridiculous situations such as municipalities spending thousands of dollars on putting families up in motels because all the shelters are full.

Public transit, again, is a very important issue for low-income people. They depend on it as they cannot afford to own cars or take taxis. Saddled with its new financial responsibilities, Metro will be forced to increase fares and cut back service, which will lead to more isolation for low-income people and more difficulties in accessing the services they need. It is also very unlikely that there will

be any funds left for retrofitting in order to make transit accessible for the disabled and the elderly.

Public health programs are very important for low-income people too, and with the downloading of costs, both the quantity and the quality of them are likely to suffer. They are an essential investment in prevention and an important link between existing social service and health care systems. Reducing them will only lead to greater costs in social services and health care in the long term.

The downloading of a lot of the responsibility for providing long-term care, coupled with the current demography of Metro, will result in the need for long-term care outstripping the ability of Metro to provide it by far. We have an aging population, we have an increasing number of frail elderly persons who require a lot of care and there are hospital closures, increasing the demand for long-term care. How is Metro going to cope? The only options will be an increase in user fees, which poorer seniors cannot afford, or a reduction in service quality and standards.

Low-income seniors are also very dependent on programs provided at our recreation centres for their socialization needs. They cannot afford any other form of entertainment.

Low Income Families Together believes that the results of amalgamating the cities of Metro would be devastating for low-income people. There is no evidence that amalgamating the cities will reduce costs. In fact, the evidence is all to the contrary. All academic and government research shows that the best size for a city from a financial point of view is between 200,000 and one million. In the US, cities with over a million inhabitants spend 21% more per capita than cities with populations between 500,000 and one million.

Low-income people will bear the brunt of the costs of the new, more powerful bureaucracy as well as the costs of downloading, both in increased rents from which they have little protection with the abandonment of rent controls and in the cutback of services on which they depend.

The municipalities of Metro Toronto largely work very effectively, which is why Toronto has such a high reputation internationally as a multicultural city with a thriving inner core, unlike amalgamated US cities. Why fix something which isn't broken and damage our reputation in the global economy?

There is evidence, however, that amalgamation will result in less citizen participation and significantly reduce involvement in municipal politics, with more costly campaigns and a more remote and powerful bureaucracy.

I immigrated to Canada from Spain 20 years ago. Spain was just emerging from a Fascist dictatorship with humongous bureaucracies and hardly any citizen participation. Even to get a library card you had to traipse back and forth between four different government offices. In Canada I became involved in issues and campaigns in the wards I lived and worked in because they were issues which directly affected my neighbourhood and because access to information and input at city hall were not intimidating.

With the new amalgamated structure it will be far more difficult for low-income people to defend their neighbourhoods as livable communities. They will have to deal with more powerful bureaucrats and councillors who have less time for them and are less familiar with their communities.

**1550**

**Mr Newman:** Thank you, Ms MacKenzie, for taking the time to come before the committee today.

On the second page of your brief, it states, "Only those who are affluent and/or well connected will be able to run for office and those who get elected will not be able to represent all of their constituents effectively because the business interests or party which supported their campaign will expect to have favours returned." You talked about party politics that would be brought into municipal government. Is that what you were saying?

**Ms MacKenzie:** I suppose I'm indicating a person could not run independently unless they had — they'd either have to have a lot of money or they'd have to have a political party behind them.

**Mr Newman:** Okay. I just wanted to say that party politics is very much alive at the municipal level.

**Ms MacKenzie:** Yes. I'm not denying that.

**Mr Newman:** Okay. Thank you. The second point was that you said, "Currently, wards are small enough for councillors to know all of the different neighbourhoods in their ward." With what's being proposed in Bill 103, I would expect that someone who is seeking office as a city councillor would be able to know what each and every one of the neighbourhoods in their ward would be. I don't believe they are that unmanageable or that unworkable that a councillor wouldn't be familiar with all the neighbourhoods.

**Ms MacKenzie:** You are more or less doubling the size of the wards, so you're halving the representation, and things change. I mean, sure, if someone wants to get elected, they're going to do the rounds and find out whatever they don't know of their neighbourhood, but things change, and you're halving representation in Metro Toronto.

**Mr Newman:** I can assure you I can speak for members on this side of the committee, and I'm sure the other side as well, that they know all of their neighbourhoods in their communities, in their ridings, so I think the wards will be workable sizes for people to be effectively represented. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you, Ms MacKenzie, for appearing before us today. You have used up the time available. Thank you very much.

#### COALITION OF VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Elaine Prescod, the Coalition of Visible Minority Women, please. Good afternoon, Ms Prescod, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Elaine Prescod:** Thank you. Good afternoon, members of the standing committee on Bill 103. My name is Elaine Prescod and I'm a long-time resident of Scarborough. I am employed on a daily basis as the executive director of the Coalition of Visible Minority

Women. I wish to thank you for giving us the opportunity to address you this afternoon.

I have been listening to the deputations being made here at home late at night on the channel, and therefore I see a lot of repetition. I don't want to go through the repetition of what has already been said, so I thought that when I was called to make this deputation I would write what really concerns us as women and coming from an ethno-racial community. I'm a black woman and working in a community as a community lobbyist-advocate, and therefore I focus my attention on how we see the megacity would affect our lives.

First of all, when asked about amalgamation and Bill 103 with the people I work with, I was a bit confused and not sure whether it was a good idea or not. Many people in my community are not sure themselves what the megacity means, what impact it would have on their lives and how best they would be able to make an informed decision. Their concerns were: Where would we, as racial minorities and women, fit into the schemes and plans of a megacity? Why was there so little information for us to share and be informed? Are we going to be worse off in the social framework of a megacity? What about our children: education, child care, social services and cultural sensitivity to their need; in fact, their overall wellbeing in the proposed megacity?

I had no answers at the tip of my tongue, but I decided that these questions warranted me to find out so that I can talk to them. By the way, I teach English as a second language to newcomers to Canada as well. So therefore I thought I would do some research and reading to find out what would be the impact of Bill 103.

For the first time in my almost 30 years of living in Canada, especially in the Metropolitan Toronto area, it scares me to think what can happen to our community. Whatever gains we may have made may be at risk of being unravelled or propelled backwards.

I remember quite well, in the 30 years I've lived here, how we lobbied and advocated to government for changes in policies and programs that could have a serious impact on our lives. Many days I carried banners to protest the wrongs and the barriers that were faced by minorities, particularly black people, in the areas of employment, housing and social services, and these protests, I must say, were taken seriously by government. We could approach Queen's Park and we had a sense that the people within its hallowed walls would not only listen to us but respond, even if they were not politically moved to action.

I think one of the worst things the megacity bill would do is to disregard the rule of law and take away our ability to be heard as citizens of this province, especially for a community that always seems to be at the bottom of the totem pole. Decisions made by the transition team of the megacity would be final. Imagine not being accountable to the people. When they make a decision, probably it couldn't be questioned in a court of law. This is suppression and oppression. In fact, the transition from elected councillors would mean that work with local government will be at risk. The ability to affect government will be lost to our communities.

There are some concerns I have regarding the issues of access and equity within a megacity. Has anyone in the government who has made the decision about amalgamation thought to look at the broad picture on the delivery of anti-racism, access and equity issues within a megacity? Are there any structures being put into place that would deal with the issues of access, equity and the racism that is constantly perpetuated on ethno-racial communities? What opportunities are provided for these communities to have input on these concerns?

There is more to a megacity than dollars and cents; it is losing the right to choose, the right to participate in the decision-making process. We live in a democracy, and because we live in a democracy, there should be a democratic process. Isn't that right? The megacity bill is an attack on democracy as it presents a challenge to us. It decides where we live, work and play. It will destroy many of the local programs that make our municipalities a good place to live for all people. We live in a cultural mosaic, and as Fortune magazine says, Toronto, with its multiculturalism and diversity, is one of the best places in the world to live. I say local councils must not be replaced with one big mega-council. The province, however, seems to be forging ahead regardless of what the populace thinks. Government has to be accountable to the people.

According to Bill 103, the province will appoint people to be overseers of this city. I live in Scarborough, and when I have a problem, I can go to Scarborough city council. Where will I go when amalgamation takes place?

How are we supposed to deal with 40 or 45 people in one conglomerate? The influx of racial minority people from what are termed Third World countries brought in people who are unable to speak for themselves because of the language barrier. Who will speak for them in a megacity? These are questions that need to be answered. For the ordinary, grass-roots-level people whom I see on a daily basis and who do not have any say or part in the decision-making process, I want to find answers. Where do I stand on the totem pole as a person or individual and as a community?

Many things we read about indicate that our government is willing to accept the standards of our neighbours to the south. Fortune magazine wrote that Toronto was the best place to live and raise a family. I believe that megacity might change this. Our neighbourhoods will change dramatically, as Metro will fast become a costly place to live and many people will move out to the suburbs. We will all be big numbers in a big institution of a megacity, and in the future we might not even be numbers.

You were elected by the people of the province to exercise the will of the people. Where in the Common Sense Revolution did it indicate a megacity should be enforced on the people of Toronto?

I firmly believe that some of the people at Queen's Park might not themselves fully understand the impact of Bill 103 on our communities. The government wants us to believe that a megacity of 2.3 million people would be less costly. We believe that property taxes will increase, although government wants us to believe they will decrease. The bottom line is that it will mean higher

property taxes, reduced social services, and that programs of access and equity will be entirely eliminated.

#### 1600

It is not only our social programs such as welfare, public housing, long-term health care and child care which are at risk, but also loss of employment as higher property taxes could cause businesses to move where costs are more affordable. In the next few years, without money being spent on social services, housing, child care, seniors, shelters and seniors' homes, where would these people be and where would they go?

This amalgamation threatens what we hold dear. We often see in the stores signs which say, "One size fits all." To me, this is the most ambiguous statement, when people come in all different sizes. Look at me. I can't wear something that says, "One size fits all." Therefore, as people are different, so are our needs.

Who then will meet the needs of racial minorities, immigrants and newcomers to Canada, people ghettoized in smaller municipalities? What happens to those most vulnerable? Right now, many of us in these communities have fallen through the cracks, but in a megacity there wouldn't be cracks alone, there would be potholes, the largest ever seen. Ethno-racial communities are in Toronto because there are very few services for us outside Metro. Members of our communities have always felt services for them have been inadequate. It's hard to imagine if it could become worse, or if there would be none at all.

Access and equity for racial minorities will be lost in the shuffle. There will be a change in the social equity and equality of life. There will be changes in the principles which guide us through the years and link us with local government. Larger government does not mean better government.

Look at the inner cities in the United States: Amalgamation did not work and does not work. The megacity bill will open doors to privatization. All the social, recreational and other services we hold dear would most likely be contracted out. What value would be placed on these?

What is also at stake in a megacity is control of our own neighbourhood. The multicultural makeup and tolerance for diversity and equity are most important in North America, especially in Toronto, which boasts about being the most multicultural city in the world.

You know, the other day I realized that there are the same number of letters in the word "American" as "Canadian," so if we are going to make change, all we have to do is sit on our computer and press "typeover" and we can change to American standards.

We have had the opportunity to work with local government which listens and allows us to participate in the decisions affecting our lives even if our participation was not fully accepted. In a megacity, we feel the politicians will be less accessible and we would have people controlling our neighbourhoods when they do not even know what it is like living there. I remember in the city of Toronto when an elected mayor who did not live in the city moved to the neighbourhood so that they could be more accessible. This would never even be considered in a megacity.

Toronto works because it is a community of communities. In a megacity, people would face competition for all the services required, and for racial minorities, the tolerance level will peak. People will be less understanding of the issues of human rights, and these communities will be subjected to more hatred and racism because of the competition for services. Many of us who have worked hard and fought so that others who follow could come in and settle easily would now be thinking of moving out of Toronto. We could experience the same isolation as when we as immigrants first came to this country.

I wish to end by quoting from Anne Golden, who wrote: "Access, participation and accountability are not just words; they reflect the right of local governments to design programs that meet the unique needs and preferences of their constituents. One single, large and remote amalgamated municipal government for Metro Toronto would have greater difficulty identifying and responding to the distinctive nature of local populations."

I wish to thank you for listening.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you, Ms Prescod, for a very thorough and certainly thought-provoking presentation. I think you bring a new dimension to the debate and the information. I appreciate that.

One of the things you touched on in terms of having input in the shape of this new proposed megacity is that the people who will be leaving their imprint on this new megacity will be appointed people. That is, there are the trustees, then there's a transition team which will hire all the new department heads and establish the structures of the new megacity. As you know, this transition team, as it says here in section 18, its decisions are final, no judicial review. "The decisions of the transition team are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court."

Do you think this is going to make it somewhat of a challenge to get some kind of positive direction from day one that the city is created if you've got a transition team that's making decisions that can't be questioned by a court, never mind even reviewed?

**Ms Prescod:** Sir, I don't think in any democracy that anybody should make a decision for the people without being challenged. Democracy is a process. Right now when something happens to me — there used to be the Ombudsman, there used to be people you can go and talk to. You can even meet with the politicians. I don't have the faintest idea, if anything happens with the people I represent and work with, how I would approach the transition team, because it doesn't seem fair to me that they would be able not to be questioned or make final decisions. I think there should be some sort of input from people like us who are in the forefront and who would like to be part of the democratic process.

**Mr Colle:** I guess that's doubly difficult when the transition team is going to hire the new department heads of each department of the new megacity. They're going to be putting their shape on it with the people they hire. As it says here, the new city will be bound by the resulting employment contracts of the transition team, so you're going to have department heads in place in the new city who are hired by faceless appointed transition persons. How do you even get to first base if you don't know —

**Ms Prescod:** I have no answer to how we will get to the first base. I didn't even realize that I would be here today because when I first sent my name in I was told there were no more places for deputations to be made, so I don't have any idea what will happen.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Prescod. I'm sorry, we've run out of time. Thank you very much for appearing here today.

### PAULINE BROWES

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Pauline Browes. Good afternoon, Mrs Browes, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Hon Pauline Browes:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair, members of the legislative committee. My name is Pauline Browes and I have been a resident of Scarborough for the last four decades. I'm very pleased to have an opportunity to speak to the legislative committee concerning Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto.

First, let me commend you and the government for scheduling the extended amount of time, I understand up to five weeks, to receive submissions concerning this bill. It gives the public a great deal of time, with these committee meetings as well as the many public meetings that are being held in various city halls across Metro, for people to have an opportunity to have their submissions. As a former federal elected representative, I certainly appreciate the work that you're doing here and in your other committees.

1610

As I see the issues that are before you, the question is, do we need four levels of elected government for residents of the Toronto area or would three levels of government be sufficient? I believe it to be a common sentiment that we are overgoverned and overtaxed. Do we need 22 MPs, more than 22 MPPs as of now and some 106 municipal politicians to organize, administer and manage the affairs of the people of Metropolitan Toronto? It seems excessive.

Premier Mike Harris and the government rightly took the steps to reduce the number of MPPs to 22, the same number with the same boundaries as the federal level of government, and it rightly follows that a reorganization at the municipal level is also required. The number of municipal elected persons would be reduced from 106 to 44 plus the mayor, which would become more than the number of federal and provincial representatives combined. Surely this is sufficient representation.

Besides the details of Bill 103, in reviewing some of the submissions that you have received, some questions have come before you that I wish to comment on. There is the question, does the government have the authority to institute this legislation? Of course, one only needs to look at the instrument of the authority that the provincial government is provided with and that is the historical document of the 1867 Canadian Constitution, outlining the authority of the provincial government to govern the municipalities. There is also no doubt that the govern-

ment, the duly elected government of the people of Ontario of June 1995, when each of you were elected, has the right to legislate in this area of establishing an efficient municipal governance for Ontario and, in this case, the Toronto area.

Also, some ask, does the government have the mandate to institute this legislation? It goes to the democratic principle and the role of the legislator. Is the elected representative a trustee or a delegate of the people? This issue has been debated for many years and some argue that the elected representative is a delegate of the people and that all the ideas, policies and programs should be decided by a referendum. Others argue that an elected representative is a trustee of the people. The duly elected representative of government has been given the trust of the people to govern for a period of time — say, four to five years, as it's stated — and decisions, after consultation, are made by those trustees, the elected representatives, in their best judgement. It is my position that the latter is the preferable option. I'm not a fan of referendums.

The present referendum that is being conducted does not fall, in even the slightest way, within the confines of a vote on democratic principles. It's not secret; it's very easy to get a ballot. Several ballots were mailed to my own home.

You, the legislators, are making your decisions with the best judgement that you have and acting as the trustee in our system of responsible and representative government. I commend you for the courage that you exhibit in making those decisions.

The Mike Harris government has made many courageous decisions since taking office some 21 months ago and Bill 103 is another example of the decisive action that is taking place to bring efficiency to our communities.

As the Premier stated yesterday, Bill 103 at this committee has taken on issues that are not even in Bill 103, but it's difficult to discuss Bill 103 without talking about some of those issues. I want to refer to some of the structures that have been discussed in this forum. One is public health. In respect to public health, I am very pleased that this bill will be coordinated for all of Metro Toronto. As a former chair of the Scarborough Board of Health a few years ago, I was concerned about the programs and policies that were instituted by individual boards. The artificial boundaries of the various boroughs and cities did not serve the community well with those separate boards. Now the public health policies and programs will be unified and consistent throughout. Ambulance service is fully amalgamated for efficiency, so why not other aspects?

The issue concerning education, and it concerns the property tax system — there has been much discontent. While I was an elected representative, even though at the federal level, I heard so many comments about, "Why does the large cost of education have to be on the property taxpayers' backs?" It is right to have this area funded at the provincial level. In the past, municipal councillors had no control over the education expenses even though it was the major portion of the tax bill.

I wonder, in this debate that's been going on, if the education was being flowed to the municipalities, what

kind of discussion we would be having. We'd be saying: "Education definitely shouldn't be on the part of the municipalities. The costs are going up. There are so many variables." I think it's excellent that the education is going to be at the provincial level and be funded there.

**Elections:** As we know, the voter turnout for municipal elections is around 30% to 35% of the eligible population. When there are a number of persons seeking office for a particular ward, a councillor can be elected with as little as 10% of the eligible voters. I understand that in the last election, the 1994 election, a large number of the Metro councillors were acclaimed. Hopefully with this new system — the concern for community standards and municipal taxes — a greater interest will be engendered in the public to increase voter participation at the municipal level.

At present, property owners who have many properties in Metro Toronto can have many voting opportunities. An example: If you live in Scarborough and own property in North York, you'd have a vote in Scarborough and you'd have a vote in North York. Hopefully with this new system a person would have one vote in this great jurisdiction that we have and live in, Toronto.

With the reduction of the number of names on the ballots in terms of the number of positions, I hope that it would also decrease the confusion that a voter has. Many people have called me the night before the election and said: "I haven't a clue who's running for all of these positions. Who do you recommend that I vote for?" I had some ideas who they should vote for.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mrs Browes, I'll have to ask you to conclude your remarks.

**Hon Mrs Browes:** Okay. Bill 103 has some major changes, and change and managing change is never easy. Governing in a democratic system is also not without controversy, but our open system grants the people the opportunity to state their opinions and we will continue to fight for that right. The government also has the right to bring forth and pass legislation, and I believe the legislation before you is appropriate, will effect efficiency and will prove to be beneficial for all the residents of Toronto.

In closing, I thank you for this opportunity to be present and to have this submission. I urge you and your colleagues to pass Bill 103.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

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GORDON CHONG

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Gordon Chong. Welcome to the committee.

**Dr Gordon Chong:** Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear here today.

First, let me say I think it's rather tragic that amalgamation and the proposed downloading of human services have been linked, because it tends to muddy the waters. The apparent linkage has been reinforced by the haste with which the provincial government has moved in both areas, but it has also been reinforced and exploited by those who oppose amalgamation because it offers

them an opportunity to spread fear about amalgamation. The spectre of astronomical tax increases, destruction of neighbourhoods and the anti-democratic nature of the process has become the mantra of the anti-amalgamationists.

What is being ignored or largely forgotten in all the hyperbole is that downloading could actually occur in the absence of amalgamation. No one disputes that downloading under the existing municipal-provincial relationship without mitigation measures would devastate municipalities which depend primarily on the real property tax base and dwindling senior government largesse for their sources of revenue.

The issues of amalgamation and downloading or offloading must be delinked so that we can analyse them separately before discussing how one may have an impact on the other. I'm certainly not suggesting there isn't a relationship; I'm simply saying that each should be clearly understood on its own before relating them.

But why amalgamation now?

To me, a unified, consolidated, amalgamated new city of Toronto is the logical conclusion to an evolutionary process started some 43 years ago. While it seems to have evoked near hysteria in some quarters, it need not and it should not.

The essence of the proposal, which follows the Who Does What panel recommendations, of which I was a member, is that the amalgamation of Metro Toronto's seven municipal governments should be done within a greater Toronto area context. A strong urban core is essential to sustain the viability of the entire GTA. Unarguably, that core is now an amalgamated single city within the boundaries of Metro Toronto.

Metro Toronto is to the GTA what the city of Toronto was once to Metro. The analogy is too obvious to overlook. I think it's time that some people take a Valium and calm down a bit and get a grip, because what's been proposed is the consolidation or amalgamation of seven municipalities, not some massive, unilateral disfranchising of our citizens. We aren't talking about some radical new concept that has sprung fully formed from the Premier's forehead or any of the cabinet; it has been in place and has grown incrementally since 1953, when the regional municipality of Metro was formed, modelled on the old two-tier county system.

In 1953, roughly 30 municipalities were amalgamated to 13. In 1967, Metro was further amalgamated to the six existing municipalities, even though the Goldenberg commission recommended four. An amalgamated city, Metro Toronto, has been delivering services like policing, transit, social services, ambulance services, waste disposal, substitute child care and homes for the aged for 30 to 40 years. What the heck is so revolutionary or outrageous about the area's ultimate amalgamation to a single unit of governance?

For those who insist on using the misnomer "megacity" to refer to an amalgamated, unified new city of Toronto of roughly 2.3 million people, even though by definition a megacity is one of 10 million or more people, I've got news for you: You've been living in and governed by a megacity since 1954 when Metro came into existence. John Sewell himself served on Metro

council. Is he, along with other anti-amalgamationists, now repudiating it? Who elected him in his current reincarnation to speak? Who is he accountable to? Who funds him?

The greatest testimony to amalgamation and the most compelling longitudinal study is staring us right in the face. The success of Metro Toronto is self-evident. The international accolades showered on the collection of municipalities known as Toronto are due in no small measure to the services provided by the unified, centralized, amalgamated Metro level of government. It's unlikely the GTA would be as successful without the vigorous, thriving presence of Metro Toronto regional government; in essence, the proposed new city of Toronto.

Let's look for a moment at some of the objections to amalgamation and the natural fear of change that it engenders and that is being exploited by self-appointed spokesmen like Sewell.

Various municipalities are producing figures that purport to show that there will be astronomical tax increases precipitated by downloading. These are based on the most pessimistic scenarios using current assumptions without factoring in any of the mitigation measures that have been proposed. Besides, when is the last time any municipal politician had the intestinal fortitude, the guts, to support a 20% tax increase? At Metro, we are currently agonizing over a 2.5% to 3.5% increase. Local councils should stop their fearmongering and be honest. I know it might be a novelty, as North York is finding out, but I'm sure their constituents would appreciate it.

Another fear is that neighbourhoods will be destroyed. Stoking the flames of that fear is both patronizing and contemptuous of the activist community spirit of our neighbourhood residents and ratepayers. In 1954, did Swansea, Leaside, Forest Hill or Rosedale disappear? In 1967, did Don Mills, the Annex, the Junction, the Beaches or Riverdale disappear?

In 1997, it is highly unlikely that neighbourhoods with active citizen engagement are going to disappear. Now, as in the past, it is a misplaced fear, because vibrant neighbourhoods will never disappear. However, it is a fear that is being exploited to animate and bolster the anti-amalgamation side.

Let's look at the accusation that the whole process is undemocratic because the province, as someone earlier said, is ramming change down our throats. John Sewell is also shamelessly misrepresenting what is constitutionally and electorally sanctioned.

John Sewell, the mayors and the other proponents of the referenda, in their various mutations, taking place in different cities across Metro would have you believe that they are the staunch defenders of democracy. But they have a pretty narrow view of what constitutes democracy. The various referenda serve to demonstrate the self-centredness of their proponents. Why was it kick-started by six mayors who stand to lose their jobs in an amalgamated, unified city? They decided the question, they're administering the process, and they are actively promoting and funding only one side in the debate. Will the results be an unbiased, legitimate expression of the democratic will of the electorate?

All along, most people have agreed, both pro and con, that Metro Toronto and the GTA are an integrated economic unit with common interests and a common destiny that defy arbitrary geographic borders. If that is self-evident and it has achieved consensus, how can these dedicated, tenacious defenders of the democratic process deny the important stakeholders beyond Metro's borders an opportunity to vote on the future of Ontario's economic engine? To be most legitimate, only a true referendum that included the GTA regional municipalities at the very least could be said to be representative of the views of most of the stakeholders.

Just as Quebec's referendum had implications for the entire country, Metro's so-called referenda have implications for the entire province. But we have a majority provincial government elected over a year and a half ago that is the legitimate expression of the voters across this province which includes all the important stakeholders. Its Common Sense Revolution said it would downsize and streamline government. It is doing just that with Bill 103.

Municipal politicians would be better advised, I think, to serve out the balance of their terms as responsibly as possible, rather than wasting taxpayers' money on referenda that are unrepresentative and incomplete.

Bill 103 has also been labelled as an unprecedented amalgamation that has no studies to back it. Well, that's true. Toronto is unique and it has no historical parallel, so how are you going to have studies that are going to back it? But there are other amalgamations — I know I'm going to run out of time, but I'd like to talk about Halifax and Winnipeg, the unicity etc. If somebody wants to ask me about it, I'll be happy to answer the question. But those amalgamations we can learn from.

The vision of a single, amalgamated city is worth the difficult growing pains that undoubtedly will be encountered. The new city of Toronto will be more competitive and have more clout in negotiations with senior levels of government. We would be taking the first step, we'd be setting a precedent and developing a prototype, for what I think could be a modern city-state that could demand constitutional recognition.

Amalgamation is both symbolic and logical. Amalgamation was conceived 43 years ago and it's had a 43-year gestation period. We should now give birth to the new city of Toronto and march confidently into the new millennium.

Thank you for your attention.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Chong. Mr Marchese, you have about a minute.

**Mr Marchese:** That's a shame, because there isn't much time. I'd love to ask you several questions, but I'm going to make some statements.

First of all, the province is doing exactly what municipal politicians are doing: The province is presenting one view and the municipalities are defending their own. That's why you get that opinion. One is a response to the other.

The second point I wanted to make quickly is that you seem to assault and insult a lot of ordinary citizens, different people, with the language you use of them: "near hysteria" kind of language, "take a Valium" kind of lan-

guage, "emotional hyperbole," and quite a number of other words. I don't know why you insult them that way.

The third: Why wouldn't natural evolution be the amalgamation of Metropolitan council functions with the GTA and force that as a natural evolution towards those services, as opposed to eliminating cities?

1630

**Dr Chong:** Well, I indicated that in my remarks. I mean, 43 years ago when Metro Toronto, the two-tier system, came into existence, it was clearly destined and one of the objectives was to eventually amalgamate to a single city. I don't think I need to repeat what I said, but it's evolved from close to 30 to 13, down to six when it should have been four had it not been for some effective political lobbying, and I think to go the final step in 30 years and amalgamate what should have been four but are currently six municipalities into one single entity is not farfetched.

**Mr Marchese:** I'm talking about Metro and the GTA amalgamating, those services.

**Dr Chong:** But the Crombie panel in fact are suggesting that the amalgamation in Metro Toronto should take place in the greater Toronto area context, which means that the 905 regions should be looked at as well. In my opinion, the 905 regions are not at the same stage of maturity as the 416, meaning Metro, but clearly you need a services board or some authority to coordinate the services that spill over the boundaries of Metro and into the other regions.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry. I have to interrupt, cut you off. Thank you very much, Mr Chong, for being here today.

#### DILYS JONES

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Dilys Jones, please. Good afternoon, Ms Jones, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mrs Dilys Jones:** I'd like to thank you for the opportunity of being here. I'm not a politician; I'm a homemaker, a wife, a mother, a grandmother and almost a full-time volunteer and I just felt the need to be here. My name is Dilys Jones and I am a resident of the borough of East York.

I would like to preface my remarks by saying that I have been a proud resident of East York for 40 years. My children were all born in the Toronto East General Hospital and educated in East York schools. I spend many hours each week volunteering within my community. It is a privilege to be personally acquainted with the mayors, past and present, and my councillors.

Having said all of this, I must now say that I support Bill 103. It is time for this great city of Toronto to move forward, to really become the world-class city that we claim to be.

Speaking again of East York, it is a proud claim of the council that we have had no tax increase for some years. However, as I drive around the borough, I see the infrastructure crumbling. The roads are in bad shape, the sewers need replacing, we have very little industrial tax base and, under the present form of government, we have no hope of attracting new businesses.

I cannot see East York surviving under the present system. Already Mayor Lastman has suggested that we be "eaten up" by North York and Scarborough, and if Bill 103 is not passed, this may well happen. I'm sorry, Mel, but I'd rather take my chances with Toronto under the Bill 103 structure.

I cannot say that I support the name "megacity," because that is certainly not accurate. We would, in the world scheme of things, at best be a mini-city, but we can be the best one, and this has already been recognized by Metro council.

Nobody enjoys government, and it has been said for years that we in Ontario are overgoverned. Now it's time to deal with the issue.

The so-called referendum which is now being conducted by the municipalities should really be called a public opinion poll. The six mayors couldn't agree on how best to handle the voting, and so each municipality is doing its own thing.

Certainly in East York the whole process is flawed. This isn't surprising, as the planning was done in a very hurried manner. I cannot fault the councillors for this. They had to do what they felt was right. However, the list being used is three years old and many new residents are not receiving their ballots.

I was at a local town hall meeting last night, and although many people feel they want to support a unified city, they are afraid their taxes will increase dramatically because of the sharing of expenses. I realize that Bill 103 has no mention of expense sharing or downloading, but in the eyes of the people of Toronto and surrounding municipalities, it is one and the same thing, and as there is only a simple yes or no answer to the question of amalgamation, they feel if they vote yes, they will also be saying yes to the sharing of expenses in its present form. It is a difficult decision, and in the circumstances I am sure there will be many who will say no when in fact they agree with amalgamation, but not with the sharing of expenses.

We have all heard the figures concerning uploading and downloading, duplication of services etc, and there is no need to repeat them. However, one figure I have not heard mentioned is the \$40 million the city of Toronto alone saved in welfare payments in 1996 since the welfare act was reformed.

There is no doubt that the provincial government will have to make compromises. I am quite sure they do not wish to see the newly formed city crumble under the burden of downloaded payments. Perhaps they need a further three- or six-month period to plan all the details and to allow candidates who intend to run for the new city council time to raise their funds and put their campaigns in order. These are decisions that must be made sooner rather than later.

Some people who love East York as much as I do are worried that it will disappear. I can't see this happening. We are a community made up of people who care. We have an extremely high rate of volunteers per capita in East York, and this wouldn't go away. We will always be East York, just as Leaside is still Leaside, the Beaches are the Beaches and Riverdale is Riverdale, communities all, with community events and community feelings.

We need to elect 45 excellent candidates to run our new city and make the necessary changes, not all at once but in an orderly and businesslike manner. They need to be people who can see beyond the next election and who believe in this new city and will give their all to make it work. It is a huge job. It cannot happen overnight. Some people will be hurt, and I am sorry for that. But we must progress. We must leave a legacy of good order and government for our children and grandchildren.

The anti-megacity groups are making themselves heard very loud and clear. Would the shouts be quite as loud if it were their particular political party in power and doing this? I don't think so. If people really cared about their community, they would be out on municipal election day to vote for their candidates. Voter turnout in all of our municipalities is dismal, sometimes less than 30%. Does this indicate community caring? Only by a very few.

Would the mayors be shouting as loud if their jobs were not on the line? I don't think so. Many of them are already making plans to be candidates in the election for the new unified city council. Good for them. I hope some of them are elected. They are good and caring people.

Let's grow up, Toronto. We need to make the right decisions, and make them meaningful and progressive and in a timely manner. Bill 103 is the start of something good.

**Mr Hastings:** Thank you, Mrs Jones, for a more farsighted, balanced presentation. I notice that as usual we have the offside comments; if anybody comes and states a contrary view that's well argued and solidly presented, somehow you're just barely tolerated. That's been the continuing trend around here for three weeks, but we'll endure.

My question, Mrs Jones, to you is there is this unquestioning thesis around here that every neighbourhood and community is just about to drop off into Lake Ontario when and if this legislation is passed and that there will be no more communities such as Weston or East York, Swansea or Long Branch, Mimico or West Hill, that they're all just going to disappear overnight with this bill, which suggests the absurdity of the argument. I'd like to know how you see yourself or your fellow folks who are volunteers in the new amalgamated city. Do you see their roles changing much, or staying about the same?

1640

**Mrs Jones:** My volunteer work is mostly done at the Toronto East General Hospital. It has a very large catchment area which goes beyond the boundaries of East York, and people come from all walks of that area. I don't see the volunteers ever stopping, certainly not in East York. There's a great love of East York and a great feeling of community, which has been nurtured by our councils over the years but I think nurtured in such a way that it won't go away.

As you say, the Swaneas and Riverdales and the Beaches — the Beach is a community; that's all it ever has been. It is very much a community and I just don't think that will ever go away. People need communities, people need their neighbours and they need each other. I think that's important.

**Mr Parker:** Mrs Jones, you made a comment that I want to pick up on. It echoed a comment from the

previous speaker related to the number of issues that have been rolled into the discussion of the prospect of Toronto's amalgamation, the confusion you refer to.

I will tell you, I have noticed from a great number of the presenters who have appeared before this committee that discussion, presumably on the subject of amalgamation, has branched into a whole host of other issues unrelated to Bill 103 and unrelated to amalgamation. Jack Diamond was here yesterday. He never did get around to talking about amalgamation. He talked about other matters.

You're from East York; so am I. You are probably aware of the campaign under way by a group that calls itself Team East York. They're going door to door handing out brochures that urge people to vote no. It gives all the reasons people should vote no and it gives all the arguments against amalgamation. In your view, has that group done a good job of distinguishing between the issues in this case? Have they done a good job of focusing on the issues relating to amalgamation —

**The Vice-Chair:** You're running out of time, Mr Parker.

**Mr Parker:** — as distinct from other issues unrelated to amalgamation?

**Mrs Jones:** No, I don't think they have. They have definitely combined the two issues. I was most disturbed last night at the town hall meeting to find people felt that way. They're not looking at amalgamation; they are looking at the money. They're looking at —

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs Jones. Sorry to cut you off, but we have run out of time.

#### BETH MOORE MILROY

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Beth Milroy. Welcome to the standing committee.

**Dr Beth Moore Milroy:** Thank you. My name is Beth Moore Milroy, professor of urban and regional planning at Ryerson. I'm glad to have the opportunity to address this committee regarding Bill 103. I'd like to make the following three points: (1) Bill 103 should be withdrawn; (2) there are sound, even exciting, alternatives to Bill 103 just waiting for elaboration; (3) if the bill is not withdrawn, MPPs should vote against it.

On the first, that Bill 103 should be withdrawn: This bill is not an appropriate basis for restructuring urban government. Mr Leach has said that there will be amendments. However, even if the bill is amended to bring it into line with basic democratic practice, it still constitutes illogical policy.

Regarding democratic practices first: No member of this Legislature should vote in favour of a bill that places its implementation above the rule of law or that usurps citizens' rights to decide how they will be governed. This bill does both.

I beseech members of Parliament to read Bill 103 in the original, not merely in briefing notes. This may sound like a gratuitous request. However, I have good reason to believe that some MPPs, even in the cabinet, have not actually read the bill.

To read it is to understand why it must be withdrawn. One has to be shocked by the arrogation of powers to the

provincial government and away from the people directly affected by the legislation. One is staggered by the statements that the trustees and transition team, and the government to which they report, are above the law.

One has to be astounded that virtually the entire bill is about the powers given to the trustees and the transition team. It says nothing substantial whatever about the new city, what it will be like, how it will manage itself. This city, the largest in Canada, is to be born in nine months from projected passage of the legislation as a great lump, with neither form nor clear reason for existing. This bill is not a sensible basis for structuring urban government. It should be withdrawn entirely.

**Regarding illogical policy:** To massively restructure urban government necessarily entails justifying it logically. I have paid close attention to the justifications that government representatives have offered for Bill 103. They seem to boil down to three.

First, saving money: As has been said so often, there is no evidence whatever, leaving aside the less than thorough KPMG report, to support the claim that money will be saved by amalgamating the six cities. All evidence points in the opposite direction, that in all probability the megacity will cost more to run than the six individually. I find the evidence that costs will be higher compelling.

The second justification: Finish the 28%. It seems intuitively logical that if 72% of Metro's services are amalgamated, and this is cost-effective, then it will be even more cost-effective if the remaining 28% are also amalgamated. But intuition lets us down here, because one is assuming all services are alike: seen one, seen them all. But actually each service factors out differently. Urban economists have studied them all for decades. There are probably no savings or economies of scale for those remaining services, and there may even be higher costs or diseconomies associated with them. Thus, the argument for finishing the job depends upon faulty logic.

A rough analogy to this logic would be this: Assume I have eaten a meal, I am three quarters full and feeling comfortable. If I keep eating, this does not mean I will become even more comfortable; in fact, I will start becoming uncomfortable, and perhaps start to feel ill. When you think about the 28% solution, analyse it like you would your supper: Some is good, lots is not so good; not like lottery winnings where some is good and lots is better.

The third justification given is that we have done enough studies. There certainly have been studies, but none at all about amalgamating the six cities of Metro, to my knowledge. Further, all the studies that have been done argue for solutions which bear no resemblance whatever to Bill 103. I worry that supporters of this bill have not read those studies, because in speeches, interviews and the infamous One Toronto for All brochure the reports are paraded as if they offer justification for Bill 103. In fact, if they do anything, it is the opposite.

All the important studies take as their point of departure that it is the GTA, not Metro, which must be dealt with first. This is logical. Why? Because the two scales are intimately intertwined and because we need to know the larger structure before adjusting the smaller.

Mr Leach laments that even with all the studies, "People resist change." People should resist change when it has no policy support whatsoever. To do otherwise is to relinquish the duties of citizenship. All of us, the government included, should rejoice that our fellow citizens are so well educated that they know a justified from an unjustifiable piece of legislation.

On to alternatives: Principled alternatives to changing urban government in this region already exist in various forms. The principles for organizing government need to include, first and foremost: Get the right scale for the issue. This is the first and most important principle. Return to the Golden report and other studies that look at the GTA scale. That scale is essential in the Toronto region for activities such as transportation, economic development, environmental protection and regional planning. Environmental protection, for example, needs to be conceptualized at the level of the GTA because the watersheds are at that scale.

And go to studies that teach about the local, human scale. That is the scale at which people can understand their surroundings and at which they believe they can have an effect on their milieux. Understanding and believing in one's efficacy brings out energy, caring, innovation, dedication. Take away the capacity to grasp the scale and to have a say in what's going on and people stop paying attention, the city debilitates.

The right scale feeds efficacy; efficacy feeds caring; caring feeds the city; and around we go.

A related point is made by the scholar Robert Putnam, whose book, *Making Democracy Work*, is a 20-year study of the conditions that create strong, responsive, effective, representative institutions. One of his main findings is that good civic relations underpin economic wellbeing; that is, first you need good civic relations at the local scale, then you may have a good economy. Most of us think it is the other way round, that a good economy precedes a good city. But no, a good economy depends upon active networks of civically engaged people. Professor Putnam's findings fit with those of AnnaLee Saxenian for Silicon Valley in California, to name only one other study of this type. The right scale is a necessary condition of both a civil society and a good economy.

**1650**

A second principle to bear in mind is that services can be delivered at varying scales that need not match a jurisdiction. One garbage collection service could be used by three municipalities, by one and a half or by 12.7.

A third principle is that each service can be offered by a different mode, via the private sector, the public sector or various combinations of the two, a matter that can be decided depending upon its policy objectives. Economy matters, but so does public control.

In summary, getting the scale right and freeing services from jurisdictional and delivery mode habits from the past are principles for shaping a dynamic, forward-looking GTA. We need very strong local governments, like the ones that now exist; we need a strong GTA-wide body to handle the broad matters; and we need lots of flexibility in the governance structures.

My third and final point: This bill is profoundly wrong in every respect — in process and in content. If Bill 103 is not withdrawn, MPPs should vote against it, recognizing the strong and well-founded reservations of their constituents who elect and pay them to serve their needs. Their party neither elects them nor pays them and does not have first allegiance in a case like this.

If you think you will be troubled by voting against your government's bill, be reminded of your task by reading a bit of Vaclav Havel, such as his *Politics and Conscience*. It will remind you that a poet of conscience who insisted upon speaking truth to power was so appealing to the Czech people that they insisted he be president. Take heart.

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. I want to review one quick line from the presentation Mr Leach made to our committee on February 3. On page 4, among many other things, he says this: "Today it hardly matters whether a local politician is accessible. The real problem is that that politician may not be accountable." Can you comment on this coming from the minister?

**Dr Moore Milroy:** I must say that's a very difficult thing to comment on. I simply don't comprehend what could be being said in this case. It seems to me that the very point of a democracy is representation of the population by elected representatives who are accountable and who can be ousted or re-elected depending on their way of representing the population.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, I must interrupt, Mr Sergio. We've gone past our time. Thank you very much for appearing here today.

#### PAUL SUTHERLAND

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Paul Sutherland, councillor for the city of North York. Welcome, Mr Sutherland.

**Mr Paul Sutherland:** Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the committee, and my former colleague on North York council, Mario Sergio. I have a few comments I'd like to make, although I have to start off by saying I know a few people in the room, and then I turned around and I noticed my grade 6 teacher was here, who actually helped me get to Queen's Park as a page back in 1967. That was a surprise. I hope I can chat with him afterwards.

I want to applaud the government on Bill 103 in the sense that we have to have change. The status quo absolutely is not acceptable. I've been involved with governance issues for a number of years at North York and at Metro. The duplication, the cost, the expense, the lack of accountability is really not acceptable for a city like North York or Metropolitan Toronto, and we do need to have change.

I've been a representative of the Fairview Mall area in North York for 11 years. In fact the area has been represented by a member of my family since its inception in the early 1960s, so I've certainly always been a North Yorker and I guess I'm a North Yorker first. For that reason, by the way, at council I supported the referendum. I support a referendum because the majority of

people in our city wanted to have the opportunity to vote on this issue. I have not been happy and do not support the fearmongering that's been taking place. The fact that people have been told there will be huge tax increases next year and scaring people into voting one way or the other is not an acceptable approach to the residents in my ward in the city. I believe the facts should be presented to them and that people are intelligent enough to make a decision based on those facts alone. That's my position at council and it's been my position in my community.

Moving on from that and taking the new city of Toronto that's being discussed here as a second choice, because it's better to have one level than the two we have now, I have some specific comments to make related to that, particularly in the area of the neighbourhood committees and the community councils. I think the legislation, as I understand it now, is actually reversed from the way I believe it should be. The community committees or councils, we like to call them, in my view should be made up of seven or eight or nine councillors; the chairperson elected or appointed each year from that committee could serve on the executive of the new council. But I believe that committee has to have certain powers, particularly in the zoning and planning area, site plan area, committee of adjustment, even curb cuts, all the things city governments do.

There has been some discussion about amalgamated services that are in Metro now and that 70% of the expenditures are done at the amalgamated level at Metro, and that's true. But the other 30% of the money spent is actually the money that's most important to the average person living in our communities. That's the money spent on the parks department, that's the money that's going into the fire departments, it's the money that goes to cleaning streets, snowplowing, zoning issues. When a development comes in and somebody wants to build a three-storey building next to your house, you go to your local council through the planning process to make representation there.

The concern now is with the large city, that even though your representation is still roughly one councillor per 50,000 people, you as a councillor, when you're on the larger council of 45 members, don't have as strong a voice there as you do now at your city level council. To offset that concern, my view is that these community councils, who are elected representatives still, should make decisions on planning and those other ones I mentioned, and those decisions should be final in most cases. You could have discussion about when appeals could come directly to the main council, but for the most part those decisions should be final with appeals directly to the Ontario Municipal Board. That way people in your community — and this is a concern that people have, that they don't want to lose that local flavour — if you have that kind of mechanism, particularly for planning and site plan and zoning and those issues, will still be able to go directly to their elected councillor, or seven or eight of them, and have a decision made there that reflects their views and their needs in their community. That decision, if the applicant or developer or whoever is coming doesn't like it, then gets appealed directly to the Ontario Municipal Board.

This kind of approach would also free up the city council itself to deal with policy issues which are going to be time-consuming. They are certainly involved with policing and all the other issues that Metro is involved with. Issues that are often important on a day-to-day basis could be handled expeditiously and still in a very direct neighbourhood way. I say that to you because it is in Bill 103, and I know the other issues aren't, and that is an aspect that I think should be looked at.

The neighbourhood committees, and I heard comments made earlier in the discussions here before you last week or the week before that those committees don't work — I would suggest for a lot of reasons that they probably don't work, and in the legislation, that's being mandated. I would reverse it. I would mandate that these community councils be put in place. I would make the neighbourhood committees certainly suggest that and let the new council decide how they want to set that up. Let them decide how they want to have public input.

If you give citizens who aren't elected mandates over financial matters, you'll find that council will in some way, somehow, eventually make it redundant. They'll do that, and I don't mean it in a machiavellian sense, but it's just the reality that when citizens are making financial decisions that impact on elected officials, in their view that's not fair because they are the ones who will have to go to the people to stand for what's happened in terms of tax increases and things like that. That's why those councils often don't work and end up being neutered one way or the other.

#### 1700

I would suggest that if you go this other way with a neighbourhood community that's strong, and I have many other ideas on the legislation but I wanted to get this point out because I haven't heard it said up till now, that it's very important to the residents that that kind of local flavour be kept. If you do that, we'll go a long way in solving some concerns that people have with your proposed legislation for a new city.

Subject to questions, I really wanted to come down and make that point.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Sutherland, I have a few questions. On the issue of fearmongering around costs, quite clearly a number of people are saying, "When you download services, there are going to be greater costs." I believe that strongly, but you don't mean that; you mean the fearmongering around amalgamation and costs, is that correct?

**Mr Sutherland:** I guess I mean both.

**Mr Marchese:** Okay. On the whole issue of amalgamation, you, Mr Chong and others argue presumably that there are going to be savings, because that's really what's motivated this government to do this, that we're going to save money. Do you hold that view?

**Mr Sutherland:** I believe you'll save money, yes.

**Mr Marchese:** A number of studies have been done, and I can only go by the studies of Professor Kitchen and Professor Sancton; Mr Cox has done a review that isn't just of Halifax, it's a worldwide review that I've been able to read from looking at some of the readings. Is it possible that these people are just analysing the wrong issues, that they've got it all wrong, that when it comes

to Metro, some of you guys know exactly what you're doing and the Tories know exactly what you're doing, that we just have the right scale and you know where the savings are at and they just haven't looked at that? Is that the issue?

**Mr Sutherland:** I can't speak for them, but I can speak for myself. Very often people believe what they want to believe. They'll say that something can't be done and then I guess they find figures to show it.

I remember making the case at North York council in 1989 that it was impossible to have a zero tax increase. I was laughed out of council, as a matter of fact, and I did get a motion through, and ever since 1990 we've had a zero tax increase in North York and never cut any services. We were told, and people were there, that it was impossible. But as someone who's been involved with city budgets for a number of years and been very active in them, I can tell you it is very possible. It takes creativity and it takes maybe some serious looking at issues, but it's definitely possible.

**Mr Marchese:** I appreciate what you're saying and where you're coming from but I tend to believe the studies because they look at all the factors you are looking at as well. I am tempted to believe that there will be greater costs.

We had Professor Moore Milroy just before you, and I wondered whether you had been moved by anything she said. I certainly found it compelling. She argues on page 6 that if you "go to studies that teach about local human scale. That is the scale at which people can understand their surroundings and at which they believe they can have an effect on their milieux. Understanding and believing in one's efficacy brings out energy, caring, innovation, dedication." She goes on to say, "The right scale feeds efficacy; efficacy feeds caring; caring feeds the city."

I find it compelling.

**Mr Sutherland:** It's compelling, but it's difficult to know what the scale is. You know in North York we have almost 600,000 people. In York you have, say, 100,000 people. There are different scales already in the cities that are here.

**Mr Marchese:** And 2.3 million would be a good scale for you, presumably.

**Mr Sutherland:** I didn't say that. My first choice has been North York. I'm saying now I'm getting more comfortable with the idea of one city, and this is someone who's been arguing against Metro and trying to get rid of Metro for seven years. I'm on the public record of doing it. It's taken me some time to move in that direction, but the key point is, do you keep local what's necessarily local for people? You've got to do that. Your zoning, your planning and site plan, it sounds technical but it's real when you're dealing with people. That's the critical issue and this committee has that power, I think, to make that kind of recommendation to the government.

**Mr Marchese:** Why not keep local government then —

**Mr Sutherland:** The second issue is that people don't feel that all of a sudden, because there are income taxes being dropped, taxes on their properties are going up \$700 or \$800 a year. It's totally untrue. I know that's untrue.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here today, Mr Sutherland.

### MICHELLE KENNEDY

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Michelle Kennedy, please. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Michelle Kennedy:** Honourable members of the committee and other concerned residents and deputants, thank you for this opportunity. I had planned on coming here to speak about what community is and what defines community and why I don't see Bill 103 as a threat to my sense of community. However, I can't sit here and do that right now.

The last hour I spent listening to other deputants and to some of the questions from the committee have angered me too much. Some of the posters that I've seen from the No team have angered me too much. They keep speaking of the derailment of democracy. This panel is not derailing democracy, but some of the scaremongering is — this is not meant as an insult or an affront.

I live in the borough of East York. I have lived in the borough of East York for 29 years. I have lived at the same address in East York for the last three years. About a week ago I called the mayor's office because I had not received my mail-in ballot. I was told if I hadn't gotten it by Monday, then I should worry. Well, Monday rolled around and Monday evening at East York council the Metro councillor appeared with a bunch of discarded ballots. I guess that's where mine went, otherwise it went to Scarborough and ended up Pauline Browne's home.

The other issue is, it's not confidential. The issue of it being an opinion poll is just. If I vote against what the municipality is suggesting is the right idea, does that mean somebody might forget to pick up my garbage? Does that mean my water meter might be read incorrectly? The same intimidation that a secret ballot loses when it's no longer secret is being imposed on the employees of these municipalities.

We have a tradition in Canada where we send people through the UN to ensure that democracy and secret balloting and freedom of speech and votes are respected, and yet the councillors and mayors in the various boroughs and cities who are involved in this referendum are violating that inviolate principle. At least in East York my name would only have to go on the envelope. In some of the other jurisdictions it has to go right on the ballot.

The other issue — I believe it was Mr Colle who mentioned it — is that the trustees, the transition team will be allowed to appoint the most senior officials within the new Metro structure or within the new supercity structure. I'm sorry, but I understood that the most senior bureaucrats in the provincial and federal bureaucracies get to survive from government to government, yet that has by no means prevented this Conservative government from putting a unique stamp on the way they discharge the mandate they received from the people of Ontario, which includes reforming the municipal structure.

Most importantly, I'd like to point out that in the borough of East York I serve on a community safety council, which I think very directly mirrors the aspects I

see as most positive in Bill 103, the community representation. It's a voluntary council. I get no reward. I have to give up my time. The one problem I have is that the reach of this East York safety council is too vast. It doesn't reflect my own community's needs. It reflects the entire borough and I'd like to bring government home.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Ms Kennedy, for coming forward. I'm pleased some of the previous presentations put you on that track because I think many of us share the concerns particularly about the issues surrounding the so-called referendum.

I'll give credit where it's due. Mayor Faubert in Scarborough has said twice on the public record in the last week where I was in attendance that it's not a referendum, it is a public opinion poll. In fact the ballot from Scarborough says right on the return address that it's for the "megacity survey vote." Interesting to note, the return address for the Scarborough ballot is Toronto, Ontario. I guess that's something we'll gain after amalgamation, is post office boxes.

Seriously, we have Mr Sewell who as one of his vocations right now is on a retainer to advise South Africa or portions of South Africa as to democracy. How would you reconcile somebody who has made the strategy, the embracing of the so-called referendums a big part of their opposition to our bill, somebody who could accept something like the Scarborough ballot or even for those city employees you talked about earlier? You have to put down your name and address and that is seen by other civic officials when they're recording that vote. How would you reconcile someone who could say they're being democratic and yet allow something to take place that we have not allowed in votes in this province since 1840?

**Ms Kennedy:** I have a tremendous problem with that as I've already articulated. The other problem I have is the question on the ballot or the survey or the referendum, or however you want to describe this system, in that it's not clear. It can't be answered with a simple yes or no, unless you like the status quo. I'm sorry, but in the last municipal election a referendum was held to see whether or not to abolish Metro. Fine, this isn't abolishing Metro. This is just eliminating a two-tier system and bringing government back, making it more transparent and accountable and accessible to people.

1710

**Mr Gilchrist:** We're always constrained for time. There's a myth floating around out there that somehow the cities were told they couldn't operate binding referendums, couldn't operate according to the strict guidelines of the bill we passed last December. That is not true.

On December 17 in fact, if anybody wishes to check Hansard, what the minister said was that he thought it was inappropriate to spend \$7 million on a so-called referendum process when in fact we have a legislative process that's worked very successfully for literally thousands of bills. You have two points of contact: directly to your MPP or in these committee hearings taking place right now. Since then the cities have decided to go off on a tangent.

I'm wondering if you're aware that in the same conversation the minister had with the mayors about the issue of referenda, if they had proceeded along the lines

of the bill we had passed they could have had a binding referendum or at least something a lot closer, something with at least some electoral integrity to it, but it would have also allowed the province the opportunity to put its own questions on the ballot.

Do you think that was part of the motivation, to frustrate the province's ability to lay out 10 or 15 questions which would have asked people to at least look at look at some of the challenges in this complex bill before they asked that final question? Would that have been something far more useful for people to have had on the ballot?

**Ms Kennedy:** I think it would have. However, I think the municipalities would have been upset if they got an answer they weren't looking for.

**Mr Parker:** I'd like to touch on two issues, if there's time. We are both from the borough of East York and I'm interested in your perspective on this. A great number of people have appeared before this committee and they've urged us to vote against Bill 103 because they feel it will destroy the sense of community that different parts of Metro Toronto have, that the status quo promotes community, that the existing municipalities promote the viability of communities and that amalgamation will destroy that.

I have my own perspective on where the communities are within East York and how viable those communities are, but I'm interested in yours. As you know, East York was formed in 1967 by putting the old township of East York together with the old town of Leaside. Can you give me your comments on how the various communities in East York have survived that event?

**Ms Kennedy:** I think it's a community of diversity. I think Leaside is very different from other areas within the borough of East York. North Leaside and south Leaside are becoming quite separate entities in that they have different concerns with regard to really local issues, like traffic management.

I'm sorry, the safety council I serve on has representation from across the borough, it's wonderful, but we all have very different concerns and because there are limited positions on this council and because there are limited resources available to this council, no one's concerns can really be addressed, whereas if we focused on the immediate area that mattered to people, a difference could be made.

I'm sorry, but I don't like artificial boundaries for a community. A community is a group of people who share a common interest and a common value, even if that's diversity, and on that scale 2.3 million is not too big, as long as you can bring it closer to home, and in the model that is suggested in Bill 103 it comes right home.

**Mr Parker:** You comment on north Leaside, but what community are you most familiar with?

**Ms Kennedy:** North Leaside.

**Mr Parker:** Then could you comment on the viability of that community?

*Interjections.*

**Ms Kennedy:** I also started 10 minutes late.

**The Vice-Chair:** Order, order.

**Mr Parker:** Can you comment on your perception as to the viability of that community right now?

**Ms Kennedy:** The viability of that community: It's healthy. They've been looking at ways to restructure traffic flow. There's a vibrant home and school organization. It is a community. People know one another. They interact with one another. There's a very strong ratepayers' organization. We are not afraid to contact our municipal councillors, our provincial members or our federal members as a group because we share a common interest in maintaining a quality of life that we would be happy to share with everyone in Toronto, but we can't when everybody has a different focus.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Kennedy, for appearing here today.

### KEITH LEONARD

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Keith Leonard. Welcome, Mr Leonard, to the standing committee.

**Mr Keith Leonard:** Members of the Legislature, thank you for this opportunity to present my views concerning Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act. As someone raised in this city with a strong interest in history and genealogy research, I find the debate concerning this bill to be amusing at the least.

Changes in municipal governance since the days of Governor Simcoe have failed to eliminate or reduce our sense of community. The fact that North York will no longer have a municipal government does not mean North York will lose its identity and not be referred to as North York. The same situation applies to Etobicoke, Scarborough, York and East York.

These changes have instead reinforced our local neighbourhoods. Communities like Forest Hill, Swansea, Long Branch, Weston, Leaside, Todmorden, Riverdale, Rosedale, Willowdale, York Mills, Leslieville, Regent Park and High Park are only some of the local communities that continue to exist. We know these communities in spite of local politicians who insist in numbering our municipal wards rather than naming them as we once did, changing street names and rewriting our history to the flavour of the month to make them politically correct.

Toronto exists in its present form as a result of both expansion and annexation. With the outlying areas continuing to expand and develop and a GTA progressing, how many politicians and layers of government do we need? A bureaucracy, once allowed to fester, rarely reduces its own red tape voluntarily.

The provincial government, with Premier Harris, has taken a quantum leap in reducing the number of MPPs in the next provincial election. They're leading by example. How unusual to see a level of government reduce itself voluntarily. In both the last provincial and municipal elections, there was in fact a general consensus among the voting population that we were overgoverned and overtaxed. The city of Toronto, in another one-sided plebiscite, found support for the elimination of the Metro level of government. A different phrasing may have found support for getting rid of both levels of municipal government.

Who does what and why? It should come as no surprise now to see local politicians attempting to justify their positions, eliminating the other and fighting over a

smaller trough. Bill 103 will provide us with a fresh start: one municipal government, one mayor and 44 councillors. That means one-stop shopping for municipal services, not seven municipalities, seven mayors and 99 councillors.

The new buzzword should be "cooperation," not "megacity."

The ward boundaries will follow the current provincial proposal. Those of you with provincial ridings that include different municipal boundaries know of the inequities, waste and duplication of services that occur in these areas alone. In ward 8 in the city of Toronto, where the city meets East York, some streets are almost entirely in the city of Toronto with only two or three houses in East York. For east York to provide services to these people, East York must use city of Toronto streets to access for garbage collection, fire departments, snow clearing etc.

In terms of trustees, there exists a great deal of scepticism concerning politicians. This may or may not be a valid concern. With one-sided plebiscites again being forced upon us by the cities and boroughs of Metro Toronto, these trustees will protect us from the perceived eccentricities of some of these elected officials as their turf disappears.

There is much more that could be said, but little need to say it. Bill 103 is the City of Toronto Act. It deals with amalgamation only. Other bills in progress will help to alleviate other inequities and waste.

I welcome the opportunity to again voice my opinions. Do we need two elected levels of municipal government? Do we want two levels of elected municipal government? My reply is no. You will find that there are a lot of us who feel the same way. Bill 103 should proceed to third reading as is.

1720

**The Acting Chair (Mr Dan Newman):** Thank you, Mr Leonard. We have a little over five minutes for questions from the Liberal caucus.

**Mr Leonard:** I said I would be short.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you, Mr Leonard, for your initial historical perspective on this. You mentioned Governor Simcoe and the changes in governance that have taken place in Ontario. I just wonder if you're aware of any other situation where there has been a change in governance where the people of the governed area have been put under trusteeship and where the appointed trusteeship is given such power that the decisions of the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court. Do you recall any other situation where there's been a change in governance where that has been required?

**Mr Leonard:** It's not a level of government that I have looked into. I have no idea.

**Mr Colle:** In terms of communities, a lot of the proponents of the megacity list the cities, usually, Forest Hill, Swansea, Long Branch, Weston, Leaside etc. Isn't it possible that one of the reasons these small communities and neighbourhoods have been vibrant and remained livable places is because the local councils have paid attention to the details? Councillor Sutherland talked about the little things that make communities work, whether it be what goes on in a park, what goes on in a

small zoning situation, what takes place in terms of garbage pickup. Perhaps one of the reasons we have such strong local human-scale neighbourhoods is because the councils at the local level have been able to spend enough time and resources to nurture local neighbourhoods.

**Mr Leonard:** I've found, to my knowledge, that our communities exist in spite of our politicians, not because of them.

**Mr Colle:** May I ask what part of the city you live in?

**Mr Leonard:** I live in a community called South Hills.

**Mr Colle:** Where is that?

**Mr Leonard:** Just south of Forest Hill. I've done a lot of work, however, in the Riverdale area and I sit on a council in the Riverdale area.

**Mr Colle:** To give you a bit of my experience, I've been at Metro council, which is a regional council, and I've been at local council. I find that there is a dichotomy: At a regional level you're dealing with macro issues, dealing with massive budgets, dealing with transportation, dealing with social services that go across 2.3 million people, yet there are daily demands from constituents to take care of little things, maybe a problem that may seem insignificant to some people, about historical preservation or about traffic flow on a minor street.

Don't you think it's possibly better to have a division of powers where you have some that pay attention to the detail and to the micro issues and some that pay attention to the macro issues? Has this not worked in the last 30 years in Metro, despite all our warts and despite some of the problems you've mentioned? Somehow this has worked to produce a pretty decent place to live in.

**Mr Leonard:** I wouldn't disagree. I grew up in an area of Toronto where we had probably the best municipal politicians around; we had people like Tom Clifford and Fred Beavis. Under our old system of government, before we had an elected Metro council, the system was such that the two best people running were the two who were elected, and I think they did a very good job.

**Mr Colle:** Yes, and those two individuals have gone on the public record and have been acknowledged as taking care of neighbourhoods, and they were very accessible. They helped make this city — when I talk about "this city," I talk about the six cities — very human neighbourhoods, very human cities to live in.

One of the fears people have been bringing forward is the new council being bigger. You mentioned bureaucracy. As you know, what's tended to happen in the analyses done in the United States and Great Britain is that when you have bigger governments, you may get rid of politicians, but what happens is that you replace them with bureaucrats you never see and they tend to make most of the decisions. Your costs go up and your accessibility to the bureaucrats making decisions is diminished.

**Mr Leonard:** And your point?

**Mr Colle:** I wonder if you're concerned about that. With this bigger government, which is going to be the size of the province of Alberta, are you not concerned that the bureaucrats will replace the elected officials as having importance and everyday sort of attention taken into their hands?

**Mr Leonard:** When you consider the fact that we currently have two levels of municipal government, one being, as you've said, a macro government and one being a micro or representing the local municipalities, I have never found it necessary to go specifically to my alderman, councillor. I've always found the people I have dealt with, whether it was their assistants or whatever, more than appropriate.

**Mr Colle:** So you've dealt basically with the civil servants at city hall rather than the elected officials?

**Mr Leonard:** No. I've dealt with the elected officials' assistants. I've never found that to be a problem. I think most people who decide they have to speak to their alderman, their councillor, their MPP or their MP could quite easily be served by speaking with the assistant.

**The Acting Chair:** Thank you, Mr Leonard, for coming before the committee.

#### OUDIT RAGHUBIR

**The Acting Chair:** Our next presentation is from Oudit Raghbir. Good afternoon, Mr Raghbir. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mr Oudit Raghbir:** I hope my 10 minutes starts when I'm ready to talk, right?

Mr Chairman, members of this committee, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to be here. I'm here as a private citizen. We've lived in Scarborough for 29 years, and we've had an investment in the city of Toronto since 1981. We pay a reasonable size of taxes.

I'm not here, as yet, to say if I am no or yes, but I want to shift this whole focus to a different point, and you will have to trust me here. I have followed from David Crombie, John Sewell, Art Eggleton, June Rowlands and Barbara Hall. I am very authoritative, because today as I speak to you I must be one of the most contentious persons in the city of Toronto for a long time, based on a lot of illegal prosecution. I'm very much appreciative that faces like mine are here and you listen to the issue.

Let me start by saying this: The issue is not for or against megacity. The issue is amalgamation of these municipalities to have a better partnership and to have a partnership at the provincial and federal level, to have a fair share of the cost-share. You can read between the lines. For Metro residents and taxpayers, "Big is better" speaks best to have a fair share of social programs and to provide social programs.

I have changed my thought about 10 different times before I arrived here. I have taken this issue very seriously. On February 18 at the Scarborough Town Centre, I listened very attentively to Steve, Dalton and Mr Hampton, very carefully. On February 16, I stayed awake a few hours — that was Sunday night — to listen to CPAC, to Mayor Hall and Mayor Lastman. I've spoken to George at the board of trade — I happen to know him, not personally, but we met at a synagogue about a year ago — and he has provided me with his letter of comments.

I heard John Sewell a lot, I heard David Crombie a lot, I heard Frank Faubert a lot, and others. These are not the gurus of these days. They are not. The provincial government will have to listen because this is their forum too,

and the people's forum. This amalgamation will create less ARB, Assessment Review Board; less OMB — one person was concerned about bylaws; I'll get to that; less regional commissioners — we pay the bills, so we should call the tune now; less lawyers to fight taxpayers who want to appeal their taxes.

Somebody said in the *Globe and Mail* and the *Star* — these are great journalists, and sometimes they tell some very true stories; Barber I think is his name and another guy from the *Sun*, but don't worry about that. These 100,000 bylaws they're talking about can be amalgamated into 100 bylaws. We don't need bylaws for you to hire expensive Bay Street lawyers to go to court and hammer an ordinary guy like myself. What sense is that? Is that what we're paying tax dollars for? When you appeal and go to the OMB, the commission retains the best lawyers in town to fight an ordinary guy like myself who's fighting his appeal to survive. Where is democracy in that? Give me a break.

**1730**

The British North America Act of 1867 gave the provincial government the authority under the Municipal Act to set aside even the City of Toronto Act. The Toronto act does contravene a lot of provincial statutes or regulations. I'll give you a quick example: It contravenes the Rental Housing Protection Act. If you think I'm telling you a lie, you can talk to Deputy Minister Daniel Burns. I phoned him about it. I am not here to hold back my punches; I'm very serious what I'm here for.

Under amalgamation, it is possible to reduce assessment so people pay less taxes. I can guarantee you that this government which is asking for this, if it's got the muscle, even from 1997 or 1998 can reduce property taxes up to 4% a year, over four to five years reduce property taxes by 20%, because of the waste of all these expensive people we hire. I'll show you very quickly; I'm on a roll here now.

Scarborough and North York, as the gentleman mentioned, have had some reductions and they have done it. If we take all these municipal services we have and we integrate them, we are going to have a surplus. Each of the municipalities presently has about a 30% surplus. If you look at all the surpluses when you put them together, we could accommodate another two million people in Toronto, and therefore we don't have to spend money for infrastructure for the next 10 to 15 years. We've only got to maintain the roads. So what do you want to increase my taxes for? The tenant will get a share. The landlord will save some money. Couldn't beat it.

I'm here to bring out the truth. That's all I'm here to bring out. If what I just said is not true, then I will advise each of the mayors to fire all their planners and engineers tomorrow because they are not projecting where this city should go. If they don't have that extra capacity that I am saying, something is wrong.

When all the services are fully connected and integrated — take big heavy equipment, for that matter. We can rid of the old ones and we don't have to replace them yet because among the municipalities we will have excess; you know, heavy equipment for the snow and that kind of thing. You can follow the drift of what I'm getting at.

One of the biggest problems we have among municipalities is the difference in utilities, hydro that they sell to you and me and all of us. When all these service utilities are integrated properly under one board, there will be no need for peak demand hydro costs. You guys from out of town, you don't pay high peak demand cost, but in Toronto they kill you with it. It's nearly 20%. When we have a common denominator, that may not be the case. And you know what? We will have one of the best energy conservation processes. Maurice Strong couldn't come up with that, even. We will save energy. You know how? We will be able to distribute it fairly, equally, in a low and high peak way. We can do that. There's a tremendous amount of cost there, unless the commissioners on board remember that too. He's smiling at what I'm saying here. There will actually be 15% to 20% cost savings to residents, in hydro I'm talking about now. I've shifted from taxes and I've gone to hydro now. It's a lot of savings.

There is a very important issue that we have to bear in mind. When you change all these bylaws and you have consistency of laws — and the charter of rights forces municipalities to do it. I'm surprised these high-priced lawyers they pay don't understand that up to now. We have to get consistency of the law. It cannot be an invalid bylaw every time they pass it and they take you to court to get the court to convict you and take you to the Supreme Court. Who's got money to go to the Supreme Court for \$125,000 every week? Nobody has that kind of money, but that's what they do.

Again, what is important is that the municipality is violating your provincial authority that you give them. The last two governments were shifting the ARB and the OMB to the judiciary process, and it's a very interesting shift.

I think there was an article in the press that said that as soon as they decided to replace people at the OMB, the lawyers got nuts, they were concerned because they were going to lose the big bucks. I want to get on with a lot of this.

**The Vice-Chair:** I just want to remind you that you just have a very short time left. Could you wrap up your comments, please?

**Mr Raghbir:** In a good partnership for all levels of government I think there'll be a tremendous amount of costs saved and it's the only way we can go.

I think Mel Lastman made a footnote on the CPAC show about the number of tennis courts and what not they have. I will pause for a second and see if anybody has a grasp of what I've just said to pose a question to me.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry. You have exceeded the time. I appreciate your coming here this afternoon.

**Mr Raghbir:** I thought you were going to give me an extra five to prove that Dalton was wrong, that you would give me more than 10 minutes. Okay. Go ahead. Thank you very much.

GARY COLLVER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Gary Collver, please. Good afternoon, Mr Collver, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Gary Collver:** I wish I could tell you I was as flamboyant a speaker as our last presenter, but I'm afraid not.

I would like to thank this committee for giving me the opportunity to present my views on Bill 103. My name is Gary Collver and I am a resident of Etobicoke and a small business owner. My business is located in East York.

I was born in Etobicoke, and in years past I have lived in downtown Toronto, the Beaches, the Annex and the Yonge-Eglinton area. One of the nice things about living and working here is that all these places have their own personalities. The reason they do is that residents have had the tools in their local governments to preserve and nurture the things that make them unique. It's what has made the quality of life in Toronto so good. If you take away these tools, people will have less control over their neighbourhoods and the personalities of those neighbourhoods will disappear.

I believe that with less local input or influence by residents, the way is clear for unchecked development, lax environmental practices and the erosion of services that are tailored to different areas of Metro.

Proposed neighbourhood committees that have no real powers will be unable to do the important job of protecting residents' rights. As these neighbourhoods become less attractive places to live, as social problems increase and as property taxes balloon because of provincial downloading, there will be an exodus from the city and the hollowing out of Toronto will have started in earnest.

Ironically, policies intended to make Toronto a more attractive place for business will have just the opposite effect. These problems will no doubt plague the city after the costs of social programs downloaded from the province explode during the next economic downturn.

This city is just now beginning to pick itself up after the last recession, and to burden it with the costs of amalgamation and the downloading of welfare, public housing and other social service costs will surely halt and reverse that recovery.

The promised contingency fund will mean municipalities will have to come hat in hand and compete with each other to obtain emergency relief. This, in effect, places the control over these programs with the provincial government.

A large cross-section of society, from academics to social agencies to business groups, has said this is totally unacceptable.

I believe amalgamation will also exacerbate the 416-905 tax disparity. Amalgamation, coupled with downloading, will dramatically increase property taxes in the megacity. Faced with larger tax increases, individuals and businesses will flee Toronto for outlying areas, placing even larger strains on the megacity as its tax base shrinks. The downward spiral will be well under way.

As terrible as these ramifications are, I think the thing that bothers me the most about this bill is its assault on democracy both in content and in form. I've always believed that most Canadians understand and respect democratic values. Apparently I was wrong.

Bill 103 fails democracy on several fronts. It takes the most accessible form of government away from the

people and creates a large bureaucracy which will be expensive, impersonal and confusing. It will be more difficult for citizens to get answers to local problems. Councillors who must administer welfare, social housing, police, day care, care for seniors and a host of other duties will hardly have time to listen to the day-to-day problems people have in their communities.

One only needs to look at Metro council to see the problems that lie ahead. There will be fewer elected officials but many more bureaucrats, assistants and administrators. I believe that these hearings are an excellent example of the problems with large government. They were not taken to the local city halls so that the people upon whom amalgamation is to be imposed could gain easy access.

1740

The reasons we were given were that there wasn't enough time and it would be too costly. Democracy, it seems, is not in the budget. Mike Harris and Al Leach say that local governments are redundant and expensive. Again democracy isn't in the budget. I think most people would agree that democracy is not the place for government to cut corners.

It is in form that the undemocratic nature of this proposed legislation really becomes apparent. It places elected municipal officials under trusteeship presumably so they won't slip away with the silverware. These trustees report only to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, not even to the Legislature. Their powers are retroactive to December 17, when the legislation was introduced. Their decisions cannot be questioned in the courts.

This says to the voters in Metro that their elected officials can't be trusted to do the jobs they elected them to do. They want me to believe that the provincial government knows best what moneys my community should spend, what projects should proceed and what projects should be scrapped. It says that trustees know more about my city than my elected municipal councillors who live in my area, whose children go to the neighbourhood school. Does this really sound like democracy?

A transition team is to be appointed, a team of unelected officials who will report only to the minister. They will set up the new municipal government, award contracts, hire and fire personnel, set budgets, all without input from the citizens of this city or any elected officials. As with the trustees, decisions the transition team makes cannot be questioned in the courts. All present and future municipal employees can be forced to collaborate with the transition team. There is no time limit on the transition team's existence or powers.

Subsection 16(12) states, "On or after January 31, 1998 the Minister may, by order, dissolve the transition team." All this amounts to an extraordinary consolidation of power over the city into the hands of the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He will be free to mould the megacity into whatever form he chooses, all without the input or consent of the people of Toronto or their elected officials. I find it very hard to believe that anybody can regard this kind of legislation as democratic.

There has been much discussion recently regarding the validity of the referenda the municipalities are holding

regarding the megacity legislation. I have heard Mr Leach say that this issue is too complicated to be framed with a single yes or no question. I would agree that it is a very complicated issue, so complicated that it seems to me reckless in the extreme to be rushing this bill through.

This is especially true given the fact that it doesn't resemble anything that was suggested by the various commissions that studied the future governance of the Metro and GTA areas. In fact, expert after expert has come forward to denounce this bill in the strongest possible terms. Even though I don't necessarily agree with the concept of governing by referendum, I feel in this case the government have left us no choice but to hold our own.

Mr Harris did not mention destroying local governments during the provincial election, and in fact seemed to have the opposite in mind when he stated in the fall of 1994: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride? I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger municipalities." I couldn't have said that better myself.

They campaigned on a platform of consulting the electorate on important issues through referenda, yet they refuse to hold a referendum on this issue or recognize the results of the referenda that the municipalities are holding. It's no wonder that people are so confused about what's going on.

I really think that the people of Metro want two things with regard to this issue. First they want information, and I don't mean images of Mike Harris in front of some electrical wiring or in hockey arenas talking about how great things are going to be in a megacity. They want real information. They want to see the impact studies; they want to know about their property taxes; they want to know how they're going to solve their neighbourhood problems with a large megacity government.

Second, they want to have their voices heard on this issue. No one likes to have something forced on them, and the autocratic style with which this whole issue has been handled has resulted in one of the largest grass-roots movements I have ever witnessed in this city. People are very upset, and I don't mean the people I'm sure Mr Harris would regard as the usual suspects, but people who have never been involved in any kind of political movement in their lives as well as a good number of card-carrying Tories.

The government calls its policies the Common Sense Revolution. I suggest that there is no common sense in this bill or the other legislation introduced during mega-week. When you take common sense out of the Common Sense Revolution, you're left with revolution. I don't believe the people of Ontario want this revolution; they never have wanted revolution or extremism. They want a careful government that adheres to traditional Canadian democratic values. Governments have a responsibility to serve all their constituents, not just the ones who voted for them.

We give politicians power to govern but not to rule. It is their responsibility to govern with sensitivity, careful thought and understanding of the electorate's wishes and

concerns. Democracy doesn't end after an election, it just begins.

I'm here to fight for Etobicoke and I'm here to fight for Toronto. Even though they are separate cities, they are both my home, they are part of my culture and my life. I'm asking you to let this disastrous bill die in this committee. Let's start again, using democratic and consultative methods to solve the problems of Metro and the GTA without destroying the things that make this place special.

**Mr Marchese:** Our Metro councillor, Mr Chong, I suppose would describe some of what you said as an opportunity to spread fear about amalgamation, that it's emotional hyperbole, that it seems to have evoked near-hysteria, this whole audition of amalgamation, and that some people should take a Valium. What do you think?

**Mr Collver:** I would certainly agree that there's a lot of fear about this issue, but I think it's fear that's been generated by a lack of information and knowledge about what the ramifications of this bill are going to be. People just don't understand what is going to happen, and that breeds fear, and quite justifiably so.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for coming here today.

#### DOUGLAS JURE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Doug Jure. Good evening and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Douglas Jure:** Thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of Bill 103.

I am here this afternoon as a private citizen who resides in Toronto and who lives and works in the village of Yorkville. By way of background, I am a former Ontario civil servant who during his 20 years of service included an appointment as Ontario's senior trade representative in Japan.

I left the Ontario public service five years ago to establish my own consulting practice and I am currently the chief operating officer of a new Ontario-based environmental services company. I should declare that I am president of the St George-St David PC association and that I knocked on almost as many doors as Al Leach did in 1995. Before that campaign I was a key campaign worker for ward 13 councillor John Adams. However, I have never been the Premier's chauffeur.

I support Bill 103 because it is the next evolutionary step in the political and governmental organization required by the residents of Metropolitan Toronto to properly manage the affairs of our community. I do not see it as an expensive alternative to the existing multi-layered governments we now have.

During my party's first 18 months in office, the Progressive Conservatives have focused on re-engineering the provincial government by reducing the number of politicians and bureaucrats and focusing on priority services. This reform is part of the Common Sense Revolution's promise "to set an example of cost cutting to be followed by all levels of government and all departments and ministries." That promise, in my opinion, set the stage for Bill 103.

In my opinion there is more to this than just the Common Sense Revolution's promises and the Premier's campaign commitment to be held accountable.

Bill 103 and similar legislation designed to improve government efficiency and effectiveness reflect the changing values of our society. I suspect that a majority of the committee members here today like me are members of the baby-boom generation. Canada's oldest baby-boomers have just turned 50. In our private lives we are recasting ourselves as a generation of savers and investors. Reducing debt, paying off mortgages and accumulating enough assets to support a comfortable retirement lifestyle are our new values. These new values transcend our public values. The Common Sense Revolution effectively articulated our values in the 1995 election campaign. It did not invent them.

1750

We understand that excessive public borrowing is just as harmful as excessive personal borrowing would be at this period of our lives. We have grasped the concept that high public sector deficits beget high interest payments and, most important, we understand that high interest payments generate high taxes and cuts in valued public programs such as health care and education.

We baby-boomers want tax relief; it is the only real income gain we will realize as our retirement approaches. But at the same time, we are demanding better quality and cheaper public services for our taxes. We want value and services for our money, and that demands greater accountability from politicians and their bureaucracies.

A streamlined and accountable system of government at all levels is the only way we can achieve improved services at a reasonable cost. In Metropolitan Toronto, we don't have that now, in my opinion, and it is in this context that I support Bill 103.

I support Bill 103 for five reasons, and they are: It will reduce duplication and overlapping services; it will reduce the size of municipal government, but representation will be enhanced; a unified Toronto government will not cost more than the existing seven municipal governments; it will mean better decision-making; and it will be more accountable and less confusing to residents.

Let me comment in more detail. First, it will reduce duplication and overlapping services. It does not make sense to have seven different sets of rules, seven sets of administrations and seven sets of local councils debating issues when one will do. Furthermore, it does not make sense for seven governments to deliver municipal services which are already largely integrated, with the exception of garbage collection, fire protection, parks and recreation, economic development and libraries.

It will reduce the size of government, but representation will be enhanced. A unified city of Toronto will reduce the number of municipal politicians from 106 to 44 plus a mayor. Each councillor will serve about 50,000 residents, working closely with neighbourhood committees to understand and act on the needs of residents. The new city of Toronto will have community councils. The 44 elected members will be divided into six community councils, each comprised of seven or eight wards. Each ward will have one representative on the council. Each council will select a chair and each chair will sit on an

executive committee which will be, in turn, chaired by the mayor.

Each councillor will establish volunteer neighbourhood committees that will let residents get directly involved in municipal government and will be effective in keeping city council aware of local needs, local issues and local priorities. Local needs will be incorporated into official plans and official plan amendments. Municipal council would continue to be the approval authority, having regard to provincial policy. Community councils would make recommendations to council on these matters to ensure that plans reflect the distinctive nature of each particular district, and neighbourhood committees, comprised of community representatives, would provide input to community councils.

Community councils may also be given the approval authority for a number of planning functions such as amending zoning bylaws, making decisions on minor variances, consents, development permits and plans of subdivision within the community. All these responsibilities are important locally. Neighbourhood committees would act as advisory bodies to the community council to ensure that neighbourhood concerns have been considered.

A unified Toronto government will not cost more than the existing seven municipal governments. Senior administrators across Metro Toronto appear to have already achieved parity. Unions have achieved parity for civic employees across Metro. Municipal employees, with the exception of fire and police, are covered by the provisions of the Labour Relations Act. Under this legislation, successor rights apply and all collective agreements continue in existence until the length of their term runs out. Furthermore, there is a new discipline in government bureaucracy today in contrast to that of a decade ago. Cost-cutting and privatization are realities that did not exist before.

It will mean better decision-making. The proposed new city council will be able to make better decisions that impact on the long-range growth, development and prosperity of the united Toronto. The new city council will be able to look at the big picture, to create a vision of a unified city to keep it livable, to keep it competitive, to keep it as one of the top international cities. You can't make good decisions when you're fighting with your neighbours, when you're struggling for survival, when the structure of government makes it impossible to get the most use and value out of existing infrastructure and investments. Better decisions for all of Toronto can be made when assets and resources are shared across the city.

Finally, it will be more accountable and less confusing to residents. Residents who know who to talk to about services and other local issues will now have that opportunity. Instead of having to deal with two levels of government — the local municipality and Metro — residents will have one. They won't be confused about what level of local government does what. Roads are just one example of the current confusion. If you want to complain about a pothole that needs to be fixed, you first have to figure out whether it's a Metro pothole or a local pothole. Then you probably think you know who to call if the sidewalk needs plowing in the winter. You may be

surprised: Even if it's a Metro road, the local municipality may be responsible for the sidewalk. But Metro may be in charge of the street lighting. A unified Toronto government will put an end to that confusion. One council will be responsible and accountable.

Accountability is the point on which I would like to conclude. Accountability means that residents will not have to guess who the politician was or who the politicians were who made the decision or who is responsible for the delivery and cost of a service. Accountability in turn leads to efficiencies and effectiveness that is currently frustrated by shared responsibilities for decision-making and service delivery. If no one person is responsible, then everyone is, and therein lies the opportunity to pass the buck, delay a decision, deny responsibility and ultimately blame someone else. Accountability leads to a transparent system of government where process does not obscure or confuse issues and delay decisions. Residents will know who the players are and that will promote better representation and better governance.

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Jure, you've focused on some very good rationales for the unified city. I'd like to hear from you, with your unique public-private sector experience in your new growth company, I presume, how this new unified city arrangement can help a company like yours; also, combine that with the most perplexing problem all governments are facing today, that is, the high unemployment of our young people, Generation X. How do you see these things melding together?

**Mr Jure:** The resources of the city — for instance, my experience, as I alluded to earlier, in the Ontario government had to do with economic development. The classic case of where there is unnecessary competition in a geographical area has to do with each city and borough in this community having economic development offices competing with one another.

**The Vice-Chair:** I must interrupt. We have run out of time. Thank you very much for appearing here tonight.

#### HEATHER BROOKS-HILL

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Heather Brooks-Hill. Good evening, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mrs Heather Brooks-Hill:** Ms Chairwoman, committee members of provincial Parliament, my name is Heather Brooks-Hill. I live in Mr Leach's riding. I have lived in Toronto most of my life. My paternal grandparents immigrated to Ontario as young adults. My maternal great-great-grandparents immigrated to Muddy York in the 1840s. My great-grandfather was Brigadier-General the Honourable James Mason, a Roman Catholic Progressive Conservative, a founder of the Empire Club, among other initiatives. He was appointed to the Senate in 1913.

All of my relatives, including my mother, are buried in Toronto. My roots and history are here in Toronto, Ontario. I love Toronto and I love Ontario. I am proud to be both a Torontonian and Ontarian; at least I was until recently.

I am horrified at the attitude of Mr Harris's government for the democratic process. I am shocked by the

disregard for the concerns expressed by the people of Ontario about the timing chosen for the introduction of Bill 103, the content of Bill 103, and the series of announcements that included Bill 104 and the downloading of costs of services.

#### 1800

In response, I took the time to do some research. I had several telephone conversations with staff at both the ministry office and the constituency office of my member of Parliament, Mr Leach. I was dismayed by the responses from each.

In both instances, the staff spoke as if the legislation had been passed. There was no understanding or information that reflected the reality of the process. This experience, in addition to the promotion piece sent to all households prior to the holidays, alarmed me. My request for a meeting with Mr Leach was never acknowledged.

At recent meetings, both in Rosedale, Mr Leach was not able to answer the questions from the audience in an honest and satisfactory way.

I'm both dismayed and angry with regard to the experience I've described above. In addition, I am particularly angry about the sections in Bill 103 that invest extraordinary powers in non-elected people, namely the trustees and the transition team. I consider these sections to be non-democratic. Furthermore, it is my observation that traditional efforts to speak and to be heard are not working.

Your version of democracy is unacceptable to me, Mr Harris and Progressive Conservative members of the government. My version of democracy — ie, accessibility of elected representatives, honest debate, respect for process — isn't honoured by you.

Democracy isn't working, so here is my recommendation: Withdraw Bill 103 and begin again.

I work as a palliative caregiver. I have worked in the health and education sectors and often the arts. The most productive and satisfying work has always been interdisciplinary. It is in the interdisciplinary paradigm that creative and effective action, service and structure emerge.

This would be a new way of approaching democracy. We could begin now, in time to enter the next millennium, with a freshness informed by the lessons of more than 2,000 years of experience.

I believe in the interdisciplinary approach. This means we must aim for less rigid and more flexible thinking. It requires opening up to new and innovative processes. There are great possibilities and never-before-dreamed-about solutions. It would require acknowledging all parts of each of us, good and bad, embracing and balancing a great deal. This is accessible to all of us, but to do so, our souls must be nourished by beauty, love and respect.

It is my understanding that Parliament will adjourn for several weeks prior to the final reading and vote on Bill 103. Please take time for yourself to nourish your soul in the way that is most healing and rejuvenating for each of you.

There is a precedent role model in our history. I speak of F.R. Scott, 1899 to 1985. Frank Scott's career is unique among Canadians of this century. As a constitutional lawyer, civil libertarian, teacher and poet, he

helped to shape Canada's national awareness and culture. Scott's collected poems, recapitulating his life's work, appeared in 1981, winning the Governor General's award for that year. For over five decades, F.R. Scott was a leading figure in law, literature and politics in Canada.

Scott was an interdisciplinary thinker and helped pave the way for the new style of democracy that I see. Between now and the third reading of Bill 103, it is my hope that you will read some of both Scott's poetry and essays on the Constitution.

The decision that is made on the future of my city will surely impact both your children and my children, and your grandchildren and my grandchildren and generations of Ontarians to come.

What are we planting now?

Please stand for the reading of Circle of Freedom.  
we rise up

with our shouts and angry cries  
We shake our fists at the  
empty skies  
you are not gods who sit  
and give commands  
by the grace of the people  
you hold power in this land  
and we rise up  
with our shouts and our demands  
and we cast our votes  
and we join our hands  
in a circle of freedom  
stronger than your house  
in a circle of freedom  
that breaks apart your boast  
government by the people  
means the people will have their say  
and your almighty proclamation  
is not the people's way  
we will let our children grow  
with breath and hope they call their own  
we will let our elders die  
in a place they still call home  
we will not be abandoned to the tax man  
and your law  
we will stand and raise our voices  
in your legislative hall  
for the circle of freedom  
is stronger than your boast  
and this circle of freedom  
will break apart your house.

With permission of the poet, Wanda Buchanan.

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much, Mrs Brooks-Hill. You can see what we have here. We have a real paradigm. We had Mr Jure, who seemed like a very intelligent, very sensitive man who gave a very good presentation, I thought, and seems to really believe in this proposal. Yet on the other hand you're expressing grave concerns about the fact that this proposal is essentially an insult to your democratic beliefs. Maybe you can talk to Mr Jure through me to explain why you feel this way.

**Mrs Brooks-Hill:** It was interesting. Thank you for your question. I don't wish to speak to Mr Jure. My husband and myself and Mr Jure attended the same

meeting last night in Rosedale. Mr Jure attempted to facilitate a discussion led by Mr Leach.

My concern is with the dismissal or what I feel is the dismissal of my democratic rights. I come from a tradition of Conservative family. I am not a cardholding member of any party at this time. I am concerned and ashamed of the elected representatives in this province. I feel exactly the opposite of most of the elected representatives in my city government and of some in my Metro government.

The big difference for me is that this is the first time I have ever spoken at Queen's Park. I have done a number of community-based activities over the last 30 years and I have never had to come to Queen's Park. The city government has served my needs as a citizen and I have always assumed that democratic rights would be protected by the higher levels of government.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mrs Brooks-Hill, I'm sorry, we have run out of time. Thank you for making a presentation here this evening.

1810

#### JEREMY CARVER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Jeremy Carver. Good evening, Mr Carver, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Jeremy Carver:** I wish to register my opposition to Bill 103 and to request that you urge your colleagues that it be withdrawn.

In considering which of the many reasons for my opposition to present to you in this brief time, I was torn.

I considered explaining to you the negative impact that passage of Bill 103 would have on investor confidence and therefore on the biopharmaceutical startup company of which I am the CEO. In contrast to Mr Jure who spoke earlier, I see the chaos and the uncertainty that is surrounding this process and the consequences of passage of this bill as being considerably disturbing to the investor community. My company is one that looks for, needs, a predictable long-term financial environment, because we are many years away from having a product on the market. Investors need to realize that they can predict costs over the years. We can't predict because we don't even know what the consequences of Bill 103 will be. But anyway, the board of trade has already made that point, so I decided not to speak at length on that.

I considered also pointing out to you the risk you run of provoking the federal government into using its powers to disallow this bill, because of the danger passage represents to the delicate economic recovery the country is experiencing, but I decided that you wouldn't listen to me because I am not a constitutional lawyer.

I also considered advising you to ask the minister for copies of the legal opinions his ministry obtained before drafting this bill. Even as a layman, I find the bill internally inconsistent and sloppy lawmaking, and I am convinced his ministry has obtained no such opinions. I predict that if passed into law in this form the bill will be tied up in legal challenges for the rest of your term. But again, I am not a lawyer.

However, I am a voter, and my wife and I live in the riding of St George-St David, so I decided instead to tell you all a personal story, the story of how I went to a meeting last night to hear my MPP, the Honourable Al Leach, explain his government's reasons for attempting to legislate one Toronto.

Now, the title "honourable" is an important part of this story. It is a title that is given to cabinet ministers in recognition of the tremendous service they perform for the electorate in accepting the responsibilities of a minister of the crown. In this noble service they deserve our respect and gratitude. They bear considerable responsibility since their public utterances can be construed to be government policy. For this reason, if for no other, they must very carefully prepare their public statements. I therefore went to the meeting expecting to hear a carefully reasoned defence of Bill 103.

Imagine my surprise, my dismay and my disgust to hear the minister lie to his audience in a belated attempt to attribute Bill 103 to David Crombie's Who Does What committee. Now to call a minister of the crown a liar is no small act, so let me tell you more.

Mr Leach — I am no longer prepared to use the honorific — started by saying that he wished to clear up the considerable misinformation he feels has been promulgated regarding Bill 103. He started with the Golden report and explained how his government had agreed with the recommendations to form a greater Toronto council, eliminate regional governments and strengthen local municipal governments, all policies I also support.

He went on to explain, using erroneous numbers, how his government could not work out how to redistribute the powers of the regional governments, so he established the Who Does What committee and asked David Crombie to chair it. He emphasized that the 15 members in addition to Crombie were all experienced and knowledgeable concerning municipal issues. He then stated that the Who Does What committee recommended a single city for Metro, and that Bill 103 is simply implementing their recommendations.

Now, for many citizens of Toronto, the recommendations of the Who Does What committee are to be taken very seriously. David Crombie is a highly respected former mayor. I might have been taken in if I had not, just two days before, attended a meeting at which Mr Crombie vigorously denied that his committee had recommended the megacity and carefully enunciated his actual recommendations.

Let me read to you what the panel actually did recommend, from page 17 of the panel's December 6, 1996, letter, delivered 11 days before Bill 103 was tabled:

Recommendation 1: "The panel recommends that the province implement a GTA governance structure based on three fundamental and interrelated imperatives: creation of a Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB) eliminating the five upper-tier municipalities; consolidations of member municipalities into strong cities; consolidations in Metro" — note the plural — "that create a strong urban core for the GTA."

It then says, "The panel agreed that a Greater Toronto Services Board is of overwhelming importance. The panel was unanimous in endorsing the importance of a strong

urban core, with views on strengthening the core ranging from one city to four. All were agreed that consolidations should significantly enhance the political strength of the core city within the greater Toronto area."

Recommendation 2 deals with the GTSB, so let me skip to recommendation 3: "The panel recommends that the province mandate the following implementation strategy: Immediately appoint an implementation commissioner who could act as interim chair of the Greater Toronto Services Board. The implementation commissioner's mandate would be to establish the GTSB as a first priority; to develop proposals" — note proposals — "for municipal consolidations with a report by April 1997, and to implement the consolidations effective January 1, 1998."

In no way did the Who Does What committee recommend the megacity, so clearly Mr. Leach lied to his audience last night regarding the justification for Bill 103, and he continued to lie about the financial impact of 103. I left in complete disgust.

Let me leave you, the members of this committee who belong to the government, with this request: that you return to your caucus and let the cabinet know that you will not tolerate the campaign of disinformation that is being mounted by Al Leach. Urge your colleagues to break ranks and vote against this abomination called Bill 103. It appears the government cannot defend it except through lies. Is there any wonder that politicians are at their lowest popularity in decades in the opinion of the electorate when their honourable gentlemen behave so dishonourably?

To the opposition members of the committee, let me commend you for the work you have done in resisting Bill 103, and let me urge you to contact your colleagues in Ottawa and raise with them your desire to see them disallow this bill should it ever survive third reading, on the basis that its passage will severely damage the delicate economic recovery that is so essential to the success of the federal government's efforts.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Carver, thank you for your presentation today. I have been most impressed by so many presentations that have come before this committee. It's of interest to me to listen to those who support this bill and to those who have values that obviously oppose it.

Those who support this bill seem to have these kinds of values: that we're overtaxed, that we're overgoverned, and they want to see an end of duplication. I'm not sure, but there may be another one or two of these notions. But these are the kinds of values that seem to drive their support for this bill.

What are the values that you have against it that lead you to support local government, obviously?

**Mr Carver:** First of all, Mr Marchese, in my business we do not feel overtaxed. Obviously everyone would like to pay less tax, but it's much more important for us to be able to maintain the confidence of our investors over the long term, and to recruit internationally, in the world, which we can do very easily to Toronto now because it is such an incredibly vibrant and cosmopolitan city. When we try to recruit people from other parts of Canada and from other countries in the world, we have no trouble

in persuading them that Toronto would be a marvellous place to live.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Carver, for appearing here tonight.

**Mr Jim Flaherty (Durham Centre):** Madam Chair, may I ask unanimous consent to ask one question of the witness? It was with respect to the last point about the federal government disallowing —

**The Vice-Chair:** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

**Mr Flaherty:** I thank my colleagues opposite for that. I'm concerned, sir, with your last comment about the federal government disallowing legislation because this is a federation with a division of powers under our constitution, and it is not for one level of government, be it federal or provincial, to disallow the other government's legislation. I'm wondering what the constitutional basis is for your suggestion that the federal government has any power to disallow legislation by any provincial government in this country.

**Mr Carver:** I suggest you consult a constitutional lawyer.

**Mr Flaherty:** Well, I'd suggest you have no basis at all, sir, under the Constitution Act of Canada.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. We stand recessed until 7 pm.

*The committee recessed from 1821 to 1902.*

#### TORONTO FIRE FIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the standing committee. I'd like to call Mark Fitzsimmons of the Toronto Fire Fighters' Association to come forward. Please begin.

**Mr Mark Fitzsimmons:** Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee this evening. I'm here representing the 1,200 men and women who are the Toronto Fire Fighters' Association. As I go through my talk this evening I just want to break it down into three parts. First, I will comment on amalgamation as it is currently proposed. Second, I will discuss some of the concerns I have with the government's supporting data for amalgamation. Last, I will relate to you how amalgamation could affect the fire service and offer some alternatives that I think would be less costly.

Just for perspective, I'd like you to know that as an association we have never been opposed to change provided that there is a demonstrated need for change and there has been thoughtful consideration of the effects those changes will bring, as well as a review of other options that are available. To make changes without reviewing the possible impact those changes will have, in my opinion, is irresponsible.

Amalgamation is the merging of seven major corporations. It involves millions of dollars and it will affect 2.3 million people. It's not a small undertaking by any means. It appears to me that these mammoth changes are being made with little objective study; also there seems to be this "Let's do it and see what happens" attitude. It is unwise to force seven corporations to merge without taking the time to consider the alternatives. It is even less wise to force change without understanding all the effects those changes will have.

If a director of a corporation were to propose that a merger of this magnitude be rushed through based on such limited study, and then claimed without evidence that the merger would be good for the shareholders, in this case the taxpayers of the individual cities, as is being claimed with Bill 103, it is likely that individual would find himself looking for another job, unless the individual was suggesting a hostile takeover, a takeover not based on what was good for the shareholders, again the taxpayers of the individual cities, but was rather a takeover designed to consolidate power of those implementing the change.

The government has relied heavily on a report by KPMG when trying to justify amalgamation to the public. A read through the KPMG report does little to alleviate my concern that the government is acting too fast on insufficient information. KPMG, in the report dated December 16, 1996, produced for the government, takes a great deal of care in adding disclaimers as to the accuracy of the estimated savings.

Just to make my point, I will quote directly from the report. Under the title "Estimates of Savings" we find the following: "Although the limitations of time and access did not permit a detailed examination or verification of the components of spending in the seven municipalities, on the basis of the materials reviewed we can conclude that" — and then there are several conclusions drawn. Right away they're saying that they didn't verify any of the information and they had a limited time to do the report.

The report goes on to say: "Our analysis concentrated on operating expenditures. We did not try to estimate new capital requirements or the returns available from the disposal of assets made redundant by amalgamation." Understand that this is an area that could involve hundreds of millions of dollars and it hasn't even been looked at. To me there's something wrong there. It doesn't make sense and, frankly, it's bad business.

Under the title "Our Terms of Reference" the report states: "We were not asked to advise upon whether Metro and its lower-tier municipal governments should be amalgamated. The orderly windup of these seven entities was the premise from which this study began." This is hardly what you would call a thoughtful reflection of all the options.

All the options should be reviewed. We should know what we're getting into. We should know what the result of what is being done will be. It can't hurt. It could only help.

Under the heading "Limitations" we find yet another disclaimer which states: "We have relied upon the information provided to us by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and have performed no original data collection or verification against original sources. Our findings are qualified by the limited time available for this study and by our reliance on the information available to us."

I want you to understand I am in no way questioning the integrity of the people who work for the Ministry of Housing who come up with the statistics, nor of the people who prepared the KPMG report. I am sure they did what they could in the minimal time allotted to gather

the statistics requested. What I am pointing out is the incompleteness of this study. It is simply a preliminary analysis of what could happen and not a study that changes of the magnitude suggested in Bill 103 should be based on.

I'll give you a concrete example of why there needs to further study and where there are problems with this study done by KPMG. In the section that talks about fire departments it shows the fire department budget as being \$92.9 million. They used 1995 numbers but they're talking about \$92.9 million. Because of streamlining and cost efficiency efforts that have been made by the city of Toronto, the actual budget for Toronto is \$85 million for 1997, so you're out by \$10 million already and it's just not accurate. If you're out by \$10 million with the fire department, how many millions of dollars are you out on all the other things you've estimated? I can only speak to what I know.

It's also interesting to note that the report states: "If any change in the municipal government results in increased levels of service (possibly as a result of pressures to match the services in the jurisdiction with the highest level) costs could rise." The report goes on to say that they are working from the premise that this will not happen and that service levels will remain as they are now. In my view that's not a very realistic point of view.

It's difficult to believe that people living in the same municipal jurisdiction and paying the same taxes are going to be willing to accept different levels of service. The result will more than likely be one of two things, the first being that services will be reduced to the lowest common denominator. Although the government denies that it is looking at a reduction in service, the report does give service reduction a name, and I'm sure we'll be hearing this a lot: It's called "best practices benchmarking." In other words, if it's good enough for York, it's good enough for Toronto. If services are not reduced, then taxes will have to rise.

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Before I go on and talk about the fire department, to the MPPs who are from the 905 area, I have a question for reflection, I suppose. When your constituents come to you and ask you, "When they want to make changes in Durham region, am I going to be consulted?" will your answer be yes or will it be, "No, we're going to do the same as we did in Toronto; we'll do it, you'll like it"? It's something to think about.

I will now briefly comment on fire departments, amalgamation and projected savings. Question: Can the fire departments be improved? Probably; most things can. Does the whole system need to be thrown out and some magical system put in its place? Probably not. Efficiency gains such as the closest firehall responding to fire calls makes sense and is something this association has always been willing to work towards with our management. In fact, there are already mutual aid agreements in place that partially cover this concern. This kind of thing can be done without the need to drastically change the current system. Amalgamation of the fire departments will involve substantial capital costs. The question is, why would the government want to spend millions of dollars

to achieve something that can be achieved without incurring those costs?

The final thing I would like to address are some of the premises that have been put forward regarding the fire department amalgamation and our reaction to those premises.

First of all, it has been said that we will save money by getting rid of six fire chiefs and replacing them with one. That's absurd. One person cannot effectively control 3,000 firefighters. The five chiefs who don't get the top job will still be needed. Their title may change, but they will be in the system, and they will be functioning in the system well.

Second: Money can be saved by centralizing training. No, not likely. One instructor can only effectively instruct a base number of firefighters. Therefore, you cannot reduce the number of training instructors without jeopardizing training standards. Besides, can you imagine sending a crew of firefighters from Kipling and Finch to Eastern Avenue for training? They would spend more time commuting than they would training. It just wouldn't work.

Third: Major savings can be achieved by merging border halls and subsequent staff savings. Cross-border responses can be achieved without amalgamation. The staff savings identified in previous reports just won't materialize, as Metro fire departments have already downsized and most of the staff reductions forecast have already been achieved.

The last thing is that dispatch service can be provided by another agency. This is a statement that has obviously been made by someone who has no idea how fire dispatch works. Fire dispatchers don't just simply dispatch trucks; they play an integral role in firefighter accountability, incident command and other important fire ground safety functions. You can't just give them to some dispatcher. They're not dispatchers; they actually have a much broader function than that.

In conclusion, we are looking at a bill that will change the way the largest area in Canada is governed. Before you go down that road, I would suggest you use a little common sense and look at all the options, not just the ones that seemed like a good idea at the time.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Fitzsimmons. We'll have questions beginning with Mr Flaherty.

**Mr Flaherty:** Thank you, Mr Fitzsimmons, for your presentation this evening. With respect to your 905 area comment, I think I'm the only member on this side from the 905 area; of course, the Chair's riding is all in the 905 area and partly in Durham region. But I think I can safely say that consultations would take place in Durham region before we went further with developments there. In fact, there is a meeting at the town hall in Whitby on March 4 dealing with these types of discussions and these types of issues.

I compliment you and your association not only for your involvement in this legislative consultation, but on other issues I know your association has been particularly involved and constructive in the suggestions you've made. I hear what you say about time for consultation and the necessity to look at the savings issue, and I

appreciate those comments, which are of course well taken.

I want to see what I can find out in terms of your expertise, because you're firefighters. The Toronto Fire Fighters' Association is one of the associations in Metro. Do the other fire departments also have associations?

**Mr Fitzsimmons:** That's correct.

**Mr Flaherty:** Each municipality has an association. All right. I don't know if you've thought about this, but how would you envisage the delivery of the firefighting service, assuming that the city of Toronto was enlarged?

**Mr Fitzsimmons:** I'm not here to talk about amalgamation, I'm here to talk against amalgamation. However, if it were to pass, our position would be that there are scientific data of what response times should be, what kind of staffing should be on a fire scene and so on.

Our position as an association would be we would sit down and talk about those sorts of things, as long as we could agree that what we're doing is developing proper delivery of fire service versus trying to meet some bottom-line dollar on a budget. In other words, we've never been opposed to talking about how service is delivered, we've never been opposed to looking at more efficient ways to deliver service, but it has to be based on verifiable scientific data — National Fire Protection Association, Federal Emergency Management Administration, and so on. There are lots out there.

**Mr Flaherty:** I don't think there's any question that our fire services here have an excellent reputation. In your conference attendances with other jurisdictions in North America, have you met with firefighters who deal with larger geographic areas than the city of Toronto?

**Mr Fitzsimmons:** Oh, yes.

**Mr Flaherty:** So there are delivery models that can be discussed at least, if it were to come to pass that a larger geographic area were involved.

**Mr Fitzsimmons:** I think the message we would get from the larger jurisdiction is if you ram it through, if you don't thoughtfully consider all the options, you're going to have trouble.

**Mr Flaherty:** Which takes us back to the importance of continued consultations and discussions, and I certainly have taken your point on that. Thank you for that.

**Mr Parker:** Mr Fitzsimmons, thank you very much for your remarks tonight. Your association has a long tradition of making helpful, constructive comments to the government, and your presentation tonight is consistent with that tradition. I take your comments very seriously.

I want to pick up on just one of your comments and that had to do with dispatch services. Currently, emergency calls in the Toronto area go to 911. They're all picked up at 703 Don Mills and then they're transferred to whichever service is appropriate to the nature of the emergency. In the case of ambulance calls, the calls are bounced to the ambulance headquarters at Dufferin and Finch, and the dispatch office there takes over, and they can handle all of Metro. It doesn't matter where the emergency is, it doesn't matter where the ambulance is and it doesn't matter where the appropriate hospital is, if a hospital ultimately gets involved. The call goes to 703 Don Mills, over to Dufferin and Finch, and then it's handled right across Metro. Why wouldn't a similar

service work equally effectively for fire services right across Metro?

**Mr Fitzsimmons:** It's something that wouldn't be achievable in the short run because of the different radio frequencies, different procedures, different standard operating procedures. There are a whole myriad of things that would make it almost impossible in the short run, certainly make it impossible to do safely. Like I said, long-term, anything's achievable if you look at it, look at the options, what's good, what's bad, what will work and what won't work. If you don't go in with a preconceived idea and build something from the bottom, sure, you can make things work. Our concern is there seems to be this preconceived idea that's going to get forced on everybody, and it won't work.

**Mr Parker:** I understand what you say about impressions out there. There are a lot of impressions out there, but let's —

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, Mr Parker. We've run out of time. Thank you very much, Mr Fitzsimmons, for appearing before us this evening.

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#### FEDERATION OF METRO TENANTS' ASSOCIATIONS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Howard Tessler from the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations, please. Good evening, Mr Tessler, and welcome to the standing committee. I'd like you to introduce both of you for Hansard.

**Mr Howard Tessler:** That's what I'm going to start right now. My name is Howard Tessler, as you so well stated. With me is Barbara Hurd, who is the chair of our board of directors. I want to thank you for having us here on behalf of the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations, Canada's oldest and largest tenants' federation.

We want to talk on the matter of Bill 103, legislation which will drastically affect the lives of all Metro residents. However, we wish to address only certain aspects of the bill and how this legislation would particularly harm residential tenants of this city.

Our concerns will centre on the following areas: (1) property standards in the new Toronto; (2) citizen access to political decision-makers; (3) property taxes and rents; (4) social housing and the affordability of housing; (5) democratic control and process.

Barbara will start.

**Barbara Hurd:** The Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations serves tenants throughout Metro Toronto, hence the name. We have answered thousands of tenant calls for help over the years in dealing with problems with their landlords. We have also referred thousands of tenants to their respective property standards departments in order to have the minimum standard bylaws enforced. We are well aware of the different standards existing between the six municipalities in Metropolitan Toronto. For instance, North York bylaws see cockroaches as a health problem while the city of Toronto does not. The city of Scarborough notes that a kitchen that is equipped with a refrigerator or stove must "have such appliances... maintained in good repair and working order," section

2.8.4c. The city of Toronto, however, does not mention stoves except in rooming-houses.

We were hopeful that under a unified city there would be a move towards improved building standards so that both sides of Lawrence Avenue, for example, would have the same bylaws on cockroaches. The federation would like to see standards and enforcement improved and not lowered to the lowest common denominator.

The provincial government has consistently stated that amalgamation would reduce the duplication of services. The backgrounder to Bill 103 talks about the 184,300 bylaws among the seven municipalities and how this was a waste of time.

Bill 103, however, does not propose to coordinate these numerous bylaws. Instead it states that all existing bylaws and resolutions of the municipalities will remain in place and in effect for the existing geographical areas. In other words, a cockroach north of Lawrence remains a health problem, while south of Lawrence it is merely a nuisance.

What does change is the political pressure tenants can apply to have bylaws enforced. In our telephone counselling of tenants through the operation of the tenants' hotline, the federation often advises tenants to contact their local councillor about their landlord problems, especially in cases where tenants feel that the bylaws have not been enforced properly. We remind tenants that they are taxpayers who have elected local politicians who work for them. We have countless examples of how this has worked to get needed repairs done.

In the new Toronto, each of the 44 councillors will represent far more constituents over a larger geographical area than is the case now. Will individual tenants have the same access to their councillor as they do now?

Bill 103 also legislates the creation of neighbourhood committees in each ward. In the backgrounder the government suggests that one function of these volunteer-run committees could be to monitor the delivery of services at the local level. These volunteer committees, with their limited resources and authority, cannot hope to provide the same level of services to tenants as a full-time paid councillor and their staff.

Does Bill 103 rationalize or improve property standards for tenants? No.

Does Bill 103 improve the access to decision-makers for tenants in order to improve the enforcement of property standards? No.

**Mr Tessler:** What I'd like to stress now is the effect of Bill 103's redrawing of the ward boundaries. This will decrease the political efficacy of both individual tenants and grass-roots organizations. I'd like to spend some time quoting from Wendell Cox, an American expert on urban policy. He has studied the experience of amalgamated cities and has stated that the experience is one of decreased influence by individuals and community-based groups and increased influence by special interest and professional lobby organizations. To quote:

"Larger governments are more susceptible to special interests: This is for three reasons. First, special interests have the financial resources to hire professional advocates, such as lobbyists, to learn, understand and manipulate the rigid processes of larger governments.

Conversely, individual citizens and neighbourhood groups rarely have the financial resources to hire professional advocates. Second, there are economies of scale with respect to political advocacy — it is simpler and less expensive for special interests to influence a larger government than multiple smaller governments. Third, the more diffuse voice of the electorate makes larger government more susceptible to special interest influence."

A particular note of concern is the fact that the new boundaries will essentially mean the recreation of what were historically known as strip ridings, which are comprised of both working-class and low-income neighbourhoods as well as affluent ones. The tenant vote, historically much lower than that of homeowners, will have far less influence in wards of this nature.

Hence Bill 103 reduces the access tenants have to political decision-makers through the size and structure of the new Toronto government at the same time as it reduces the possibility of an effective tenant voice during the electoral process.

**Barbara Hurd:** I'm going to speak now about property taxes and rents. While Bill 103 is silent on property tax, amalgamation of the seven municipalities must be seen as part and parcel of the provincial government's overall restructuring of the delivery of services. The downloading of soft services, such as welfare, social housing, long-term care, public health as well as hard services, such as sewage treatment, water purification and public transport, will result in incredible pressure for a post-Bill 103 Toronto council to raise property taxes in order to provide these necessary services. If property taxes are raised, then tenants will pay higher rents.

Ontario's tenants pay \$10 billion annually in rent, \$1.5 billion of which is for property tax. Residential apartment buildings are taxed at roughly four times the rate of single-family homes. This has been recognized as unfair by the present provincial government on numerous occasions.

However, the federation wonders whether this government's concerns for tenants is mere rhetoric. The introduction of the Fair Municipal Finance Act during mega-week gives municipalities enabling power to move towards fairness in taxation. Will the new Toronto do so? They will have to raise property taxes to pay for the newly downloaded services.

One alternative would be to cut services. Another would be to cut services in some degree and still raise taxes. Tenants will pay higher rents for less services.

It should be noted that under Bill 96, the new tenant legislation introduced on November 21, 1996, any rise in property taxes will be considered an "extraordinary operating expense" and will not be subject to any limits.

It should be noted that tenants will fare worse than homeowners because of the income disparity between the two. According to 1991 census data, tenants have roughly 55% of the income of homeowners; 37% of tenants have an average income of \$21,600. It should also be noted that some 15% of tenants pay over 50% of their income on rent. Any substantial rise in the cost of shelter would lead to a serious increase in the economic hardship of many people. Already we have seen since October 1995

an alarming increase in the number of economic evictions in Metro.

**Mr Tessler:** We have seen from the above that the downloading of social and public housing along with other services will result in the rise of property tax and therefore of rent. Here we'll look at some of the consequences of the downloading of social and public housing for tenants both in social housing sector and in the private rental market.

The municipality of Metropolitan Toronto has stated that the immediate financial impact of this downloading will be \$370 million. A recent study of housing patterns has shown that, despite the fact that at present Metro accounts for 36% of all social housing in Ontario, there will be an increase in the need for low-income housing. The combined waiting lists of MTHA, MTHCL, ie, Metropolitan Toronto Housing Co Ltd, and Cityhome is now at 40,000 tenants. Many low-income tenants are not consumers of social housing but rent at the low end of the private market.

These two factors come together in showing why a severe crisis in the availability of affordable housing will occur in the post-Bill 103 Toronto. The costs of maintaining social and public housing through municipal property tax revenue will no doubt result in a decline of services to that housing sector. There will be pressure to reduce the ratio of RGI to market value units and to cut all but maintenance and repairs to the bone. Buildings will degenerate and fall into disrepair.

Low-income tenants who have any degree of choice will move out into the private market. Under Bill 96, vacancy decontrol will allow landlords to charge incoming tenants any amount of rent they wish. There will be increasing competition for the lower end of the market, pushing rents upward, increasing harassment of sitting tenants, forcing the doubling up of new tenants, producing overcrowding and an increase in social friction at the same time as landlords allow buildings to fall into greater disrepair than already exists.

At present Toronto does not have American-style slums. Post-Bill 103 Toronto will.

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**Barbara Hurd:** To conclude, we want to talk about democratic process and control. I want to return to the specifics of Bill 103 and have to ask the government and its members why they are creating new levels of bureaucracy, why these bureaucrats have immense powers, are above the law and can veto the decisions of democratically elected councillors.

While Bill 103 is very vague in many of the aspects of the new Toronto, it is very detailed in the powers of the newly created board of trustees and the transition team. The legislation is very careful to point out how the trustees' decisions cannot be appealed, that they are not subject to the Statutory Powers Procedure Act, cannot be sued, and that they are responsible only to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Bill 103 is also very explicit in pointing out that, while the trustees and transition team can hire any staff they want, they are to be paid by the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

It should also be pointed out that Bill 103 does not state any time limit on the trustees. They can be dis-

missed only by the minister. The transition team, hired by the board of trustees, become employees of the new Toronto council once it comes into being on January 1, 1998. Hence the new Toronto owes its beginning not to democratically elected, responsible and representative politicians but to omnipotent bureaucrats living off the backs of the taxpayers of this city.

A final note on the democratic process. This government and its ministers have said time after time that they will not be swayed by either the outcome of the referenda to be held on March 3 or the submissions in these hearings. Why should the citizens of the six municipalities believe that the new Toronto will be a thriving, responsive democracy when its founding legislation is so flawed and its founders so anti-democratic?

Tenants account for over 50% of the population of Metro. We are asking the standing committee on general government to reject this legislation and to ask the government to reconsider this shotgun marriage version of amalgamation. Post-Bill 103 Toronto will not be a Fortune 500 city. It will be, in the words of the great urban historian, Lewis Mumford, a necropolis, a city of the dead. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. We have just about two minutes, Mr Colle.

**Mr Colle:** Is there another jurisdiction that you're aware where there has been such a massive downloading of social housing on to local property taxpayers at the municipal level?

**Mr Tessler:** I'm not aware of it.

**Mr Colle:** So there's no model for this. Are there any US cities that have? You know, the huge projects?

**Mr Tessler:** Actually Chicago is one, I believe. A lot of the federal powers of HUD were transferred to the Chicago Housing Authority. The result of that is massive slums. They're not doing a good job in maintaining or improving the life of social housing tenants.

**Mr Colle:** Has there been any analysis done on the state of repair of these buildings that are going to be now on to the municipalities?

**Mr Tessler:** I believe that there was one several years ago.

**Barbara Hurd:** There's the KPMG-MTHA study, and I understand that there's like \$300 million worth of repairs needed for that housing. If they downloaded co-ops and non-profits, they're a little newer, so they're possibly not so in need of repair at this point.

**Mr Colle:** That was the KPMG report on MTHA buildings and they said there was approximately \$300 million of capital repairs needed?

**Barbara Hurd:** Right. I believe it's \$300 million, over and above what they're supposed to be applying to regular repair and maintenance.

**Mr Colle:** What's the average age of the housing stock that would be downloaded, excluding the co-op housing? Any idea?

**Barbara Hurd:** As I understand, if we're coming back to Metro Toronto housing, they started building somewhere in the mid-1960s and stopped building by about the mid-1970s.

**Mr Colle:** How old is Regent Park?

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Colle. I'm sorry. We've exhausted our time. Thank you very much, Mr Tessler and Ms Hurd, for appearing here tonight.

### TONY ARAUJO

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Tony Araujo. Good evening, Mr Araujo, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Tony Araujo:** Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to talk to the issue of Metropolitan Toronto governance and Bill 103. My name is Tony Araujo. I own a small testing laboratory that employs eight persons and I've lived and worked in Toronto all of my life. I am not an expert on amalgamation. Over the last couple of months I've watched the amalgamation debate deteriorate into a mud-slinging match where the reality of Toronto history doesn't seem to matter any more.

First of all, I applaud the government's decision to move forward in a substantive fashion on the promise that it made in the Common Sense Revolution document to end regional and municipal duplication and overlap and to reduce the number of politicians. No one, at this late stage, in any of Ontario's hundreds of municipalities should be surprised that this government would move forward on this promise.

Much of the debate to date seems to centre on whether or not enough experts agree on what the most appropriate governance model should be for Metro and whether the process is democratic. Some experts say amalgamation is good — sometimes. Others say that it is bad — most of the times.

In 1994 I had the pleasure of reading one such expert report on laboratories in the plastics industry, commissioned by the previous provincial government, whose conclusion, after much intense study and deliberation, was that my plastics laboratory did not exist. Because of this conclusion, the researcher recommended that the government provide \$10 million to set up such a laboratory. All that learned researcher needed to do to come to a different conclusion was to open up a copy of the local yellow pages to the heading "Laboratories," and there he would have seen our ad. In short, I don't have much time for so-called expert reports. Like statistics, I believe that experts can come to any conclusion, regardless of the actual facts on the ground. And yes, I understand that the government has one such report, the KPMG study. I have as much faith in that one as I have in all the others.

However, the reality of Toronto history is one of continuous consolidations. In 1834 the city absorbed the Liberties; in 1883 it annexed Yorkville; in 1884 Riverdale and so on. Ten such adjustments just in the city of Toronto. The Metro area has also undergone many of the same adjustments. In each case the citizens got bigger government and, in many cases, not necessarily better results. However, when those citizens didn't get the kind of results they wanted, they agitated; they wrote letters, they talked to their councillors and sometimes they even demonstrated until they got the kind of results they wanted.

None of the governance models that has existed in Toronto's 180-odd-year history has been perfect, but it is because of the people themselves that those systems have managed to work. We are not here today in the number one city in the world because the urban engineers in the past designed perfect systems; they didn't. It's the people who have made this city what it is today, not the politicians.

Recent Toronto history is full of examples that show the power of the people over the city and Metro governments. When the Yonge subway was proposed to be extended from Eglinton to Finch in the 1960s, the design preferred by the TTC would have seen 200 homes destroyed and the subway placed in an ugly open cut that would have ruined an attractive residential neighbourhood. The people of North Toronto didn't like that idea very much and fought it successfully, resulting in the present tunnelled system. Their neighbourhoods are intact today, not because of how many layers of government they had, but because their residents cared enough to do something about it.

The Annex wasn't always the vibrant, dynamic neighbourhood that it is today. In 1959 the city of Toronto planning board, the experts, proposed office complexes and apartment towers as the cure for the deterioration that the neighbourhood had been experiencing. If the residents of the Annex had stood by passively and allowed their local government to proceed with that plan, we wouldn't have the Annex today. The people got the neighbourhood they wanted and Toronto is the city it is today because of these many citizen involvements. Each change has benefited some more than others, but the net effect of all these changes is this great place to live.

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Did the people in these communities get less democracy after the last 10 annexations? Did democracy suffer in the village of Yorkville when it was annexed to Toronto in 1883? Yes, in a way it did. The local community lost their own representatives, the representatives whose responsibility it was to deal first with Yorkville's problems. In place of their own council they received representation on the Toronto council. Was this better or worse for the people of Yorkville?

And what of the people who lived in the original suburbs of York, the Liberties, or in the communities of Deer Park, Davisville, Eglinton, Forest Hill, Seaton village, Riverdale, Parkdale, Brockton, West Toronto, North Toronto and Swansea? All of these communities lost their own exclusive representatives and instead got representation on a council that in many cases has to take into account the interests of the entire community.

Is that anti-democratic? Are their local concerns subjugated to the interests of the larger majority? Yes, in some cases that's what happens, but today the community of Toronto is much better off because of it. Is that anti-democratic? I don't think so.

It does, however, seem ironic to me that the same people who rail at the Harris government for not "balancing the concerns of all the constituents" are afraid of a governance model for Metropolitan Toronto that does exactly that, balance the concerns of all of Metro's constituents.

I believe this legislation can work, that we can have a better city tomorrow, but only if the people in our neighbourhoods can remain effectively involved. To that end, I believe that Bill 103 should be amended to outline what specific powers the neighbourhood councils will be able to exercise and over what areas. This new avenue of citizen involvement can be a good first step in the preservation of our neighbourhoods and the unique way of life we have here.

**Mr Gilles Pouliot (Lake Nipigon):** Mr Araujo, thank you for your time and your forcefulness in voicing your support which is enunciated, cited in your position.

I need your help. You mention in the first paragraph of your presentation that you've been a citizen of Toronto — you mean the city of Toronto — all your life?

**Mr Araujo:** Yes, the city of Toronto.

**Mr Pouliot:** Do you own property in the city of Toronto?

**Mr Araujo:** I rent an apartment at Bay and Bloor.

**Mr Pouliot:** You rent an apartment. You own a business?

**Mr Araujo:** I own a business, yes.

**Mr Pouliot:** You own and operate it, therefore you pay a business tax of course.

**Mr Araujo:** That's correct.

**Mr Pouliot:** You're not surprised that the government would go to this extent and decree amalgamation under Bill 103 because you read the Common Sense Revolution, the document you mentioned. So it did not come as a surprise that they would initiate this action?

**Mr Araujo:** No, of course not.

**Mr Pouliot:** You mention fewer politicians, with respect, in your presentation. Candidly, did you think they would go this far, this quickly?

**Mr Araujo:** Candidly?

**Mr Pouliot:** Yes.

**Mr Araujo:** No.

**Mr Pouliot:** So you're actually surprised, aren't you?

**Mr Araujo:** At the speed at which they've been able to do it? Yes. My experience in the last 10, 15, 20 years of government has been that they move at a much slower pace and many governments don't succeed in actually implementing the plans that they come to government intending to implement.

**Mr Pouliot:** You would get half of what you hope and asked for, what you wish, and you would get it six years after you voiced your concern.

**Mr Araujo:** Your government is perhaps the best example in the last five years of a government that came to power with many plans. The agenda for change had some 30-odd things that you planned to implement during your mandate, and I think you may have implemented five. I don't think Ontario is better off because you didn't implement all those planned objectives.

**Mr Pouliot:** I only had four ministries under the previous regime, but that's a question for yesteryear as you contemplate your future.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Pouliot:** Madam Chair, will you please? Mr Araujo, you mentioned fewer politicians, so you believe this is a move to Who Does What, right?

**Mr Araujo:** I mentioned earlier that I'm not an expert at amalgamation. I don't know all the aspects of Who Does What.

**Mr Pouliot:** Would you be shocked if someone was to mention this is who sleeps with whom and who pays? The minute you begin to look past the pillow there is a discrepancy here of about \$1.5 billion, which is called downloading. Make no mistake about it, this is not revenue-neutral. If it were revenue-neutral, no government, not even those people, would endeavour to be this bold. They would not upset the apple cart. The political risks are too big, so they would piecemeal.

**The Vice-Chair:** I have to ask you to close off.

**Mr Pouliot:** I will close off by way of a question. I appreciate you're very adventurous. You have courage in your veins and I hope you won't be disappointed. But be careful, because these people and this minister here, by virtue of Bill 26, will shoot to kill and you will be the victim.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Araujo.

#### HILARY BELL

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Hilary Bell. Good evening, Ms Bell, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Hilary Bell:** Thank you. My name is Hilary Bell. I'm a self-employed training and documentation specialist. I work mainly with financial institutions and high-tech companies in the greater Toronto area.

I am not confusing amalgamation with downloading or money swaps; I am not protecting my job; I am not a union member or even a sympathizer. I'm a concerned citizen, a natural conservative and an active member of the Dundas West Residents Association, although tonight I'm speaking on my own behalf. I want to make five points about municipal governance, point out five problems with Bill 103 and make five related recommendations.

First of all, neighbourhoods are the level at which self-government happens in urban areas and this process is highly informal. As an example, you could take the public debate that is happening around this bill, but I'm also talking about the people who tonight are out, for example, flooding the local skating rinks or meeting with police liaison committees, serving meals in out-of-the cold programs or planning the spring sidewalk sales for their business improvement areas. They haven't been defined, elected or blessed by any bureaucratic body. There's a whole network of these organizations and individuals across the city.

The problem with Bill 103 is that it tries to legislate neighbourhood committees. The appointed transition team is going to more or less define the functions of neighbourhood committees and how their members are chosen. I have bad news for you: Whatever bureaucratic creation comes out of this bill, it will never replace or resemble the passion of an honest-to-goodness group of local citizens with fire in their bellies about some local issue. This clause is an acknowledgement that the amalgamated city is too big, however.

What I recommend in this case is that you forget about trying to appease residents with what is basically a cardboard cutout standing in for the real thing. Delete the notion of neighbourhood committees from this or any other legislation that may replace it.

Secondly, neighbourhoods and their residents get involved in this informal self-government because they perceive that they have the power to shape and influence their own environment. That is because they have real access to the district or subcity of the larger urban area in which they are located.

The problem with Bill 103 is that it takes a very unsophisticated approach to access, to cutting the number of elected representatives who are our primary means of accessing political decision-making. Yes, we now have 106 elected officials. Of these, 28 are glorified administrators at the Metro level, 10 of whom were acclaimed in the last election. That's 37%, for all the number crunchers. We can forget them. The mayor's function is symbolic, not providing access. That leaves 72 councillors, serving 2.3 million people or about 32,000 each. If that is cut to 44, the ratio increases to over 52,000 per councillor. That's a 64% increase and results in a group larger than any current ward in the city of Toronto.

In drafting Bill 103, I believe too much attention was given to the dollars and the popularity of bashing politicians, and not enough attention was paid to other important numbers. For example, how many evening meetings with residents do councillors attend now? Is a 64% increase realistic? Can a councillor handle a 64% increase in community events? How much longer will it take to return constituents' phone calls? If I wait a day now, how long will I have to wait under the proposed amalgamation? How many more administrative staff will a councillor have to hire to handle the 64% overload and — dollars again — how much will that cost? Is this planned cut just being penny wise and pound foolish? Will constituents be satisfied to talk to an unelected bureaucrat? Apart from handling neighbourhood issues, under Bill 103 my councillor will have to sit not only on an amalgamated council but also on something loosely defined as a community council.

#### 1950

What I recommend is that you reconsider the drastic reduction in elected representatives in Bill 103. Collect some data that would provide some objective criteria for whether the reduced number of councillors could actually handle the amount of access that their constituents actually demand. If the demand for access is not met, the negative impact on neighbourhoods will be gradual but it will be dramatic. Apathy is not the result of declining neighbourhoods; it is the cause. In simple terms, when no one can be bothered to fix the first broken window, more windows will be broken.

My third point is that the built form of the district or subcity that neighbourhoods access needs to have coherence. It needs to have some common characteristics on which to base decisions.

In making decisions and solving problems, you have to work with what's actually on the ground and the human patterns that exist. Take zoning, for example, or decisions about what to do with old industrial land, or even, dare

I mention, parking bylaws. Solutions are dramatically affected by built form. If you don't understand what I mean by built form, take your Perly's map book and compare the street grid on a page from the city of Toronto with a page from Scarborough. Or transfer from a streetcar that runs across the downtown core on to a bus bound for the suburbs. Look out the window. You'll know what I mean by built form.

The problem with Bill 103 is that the proposed single entity tries to merge two very distinct types of built form: densely built, mixed-use, older areas like Toronto, York and East York, and less densely built, single-use areas in the inner suburbs, like Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough. Many of you will be familiar with the failed attempt to intensify housing along Metro roads, which came to naught over the difficulty of imposing uniform parking bylaws throughout Metro. This will typify the problems of an amalgamated city.

What I recommend is that this committee strongly reconsider a possible amalgamation to four local councils: one central core of older, mixed-use densely built areas and three councils for the inner suburbs: one to the west, one to the north and one to the east. As Richard Gilbert has pointed out, these inner suburbs have special problems of their own in relation to the outer suburbs. They will not be well served by being bundled in with the city core, just as the city core will not be well served by being bundled in with the inner suburbs.

Fourth, "Current management practice recognizes the fact that decentralized institutions have a number of advantages over centralized ones, and the spread of communications technology is supporting this. Decentralized institutions," and I'm quoting from Reinventing Government, "are more flexible, more effective in problem-solving, more innovative and more productive."

The government insists on repeating like a mantra the highly misleading figure that 72% of the total operating budgets of the seven bodies are already amalgamated, centralized at the Metro level. Actually if you crunch the numbers right, it's about 54%. But there is no evidence to suggest and there are no studies to prove that the hard services that the local councils deliver almost exclusively now can be as effectively delivered by a centralized organization. As Mike Harris himself said, "Services always cost more in larger municipalities."

The problem with Bill 103 is that it is based on the outdated notion that centralized services are delivered more efficiently and more cost-effectively. This contention has not been backed up by an objective study, a study that would be based not on theoretical cost-savings on paper, like the KPMG report, but on actual ability to deliver cost-effectively.

What I recommend is that this committee amend this or any replacement bill to the effect that services will not be amalgamated unless and until an objective third-party study can demonstrate that we will get better delivery of those services for less money than if those services were left unamalgamated.

My fifth and last point: The problems we are experiencing across all six municipalities were well documented in previous reports, like the Golden report — shrinking municipal tax bases caused by flight from 416 to 905,

lack of regional co-ordination on transport and infrastructure, and so on. These problems result from the fact that there is a great big hole where regional coordination ought to be. Metro used to fill this role but it is now too small.

The problem with Bill 103 is that it does not address this issue. Here is a small example we should all be able to grasp: How many of us in this room have had to get off the subway and board a private coach or vice versa while travelling to and from the airport? Maybe you're all in limos.

*Interjections.*

**The Vice-Chair:** Order.

**Ms Bell:** Now, how many of you actually believe that amalgamation will solve this problem? Excuse this expression, but the legislation is ass-backwards. I voted for this gutsy, damn-the-torpedoes government in the expectation that it would tackle this most difficult of municipal restructuring problems, what to do about coordination in the greater Toronto area. Instead, it first devised a solution to a problem of its own invention and then imposed it on a group of municipalities that may have some of the best-informed, most involved citizens in Canada. What did you think would happen?

**The Vice-Chair:** Ms Bell, I must ask you just to give your closing sentences there because we've run out of time.

**Ms Bell:** All right. I'll give you my final recommendation.

I recommend that you delay Bill 103 until after the legislation has been drafted to deal with the greater Toronto area. At that point, I would like to see you eliminate regional governments, including Metro Toronto, and re-examine the appropriate form for local governments, not only in Toronto but across the GTA.

Thank you for your attention.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

ED FORTUNE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Ed Fortune. Good evening, Mr Fortune, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Ed Fortune:** I was born in the city of Toronto and when I was one, my parents moved to North York, where I lived until I was 20. I then returned to Toronto, where I have lived for more than 20 years. I have had the combined living experience of over 40 years of continuous residency in Metro.

I have been a business person for over 20 years. I have capitalized and operated a small business in the city of Toronto. I have transacted business with people all over Metro, Canada and other countries.

I support the program of amalgamation. It will reduce red tape, reduce costs to deliver services, reduce the cost of doing business, and make the elected representatives more accountable to the voters. It will significantly change the political and management structures of the municipality to create a new forum for positive change.

I would be extremely disappointed if the province missed this opportunity to quickly put this plan into action. Amalgamation has been an ongoing plan. It has

created something which we term the greater Toronto area, which originated from countless small, semi-autonomous settlements which have grown into each other to practically form one settlement. Creating a larger city of Toronto is a partial acknowledgement of the reality of this situation, and since it has taken almost 200 years for it to happen, the current plan is definitely not premature or hasty.

Looking back in time, when I was a proud resident of what is currently the city of North York, additionally I always wanted the cachet of being a part of the city of Toronto. Today, as a resident of the city of Toronto, if anyone feels the way I felt then, the way I still feel, then certainly amalgamation is the preferred plan. As residents, we have something to contribute to each other, which has very little to do with an arbitrarily defined civic boundary.

With the means of communication we possess, such as radio and television, telephone and computer, we have opportunities to benefit from centralized delivery of many varied services. Amalgamation is another tool for communication by which we will avail ourselves of reduced costs and improved delivery of services such as water, roads, parks and fire departments. With improved communications, voters are better informed and make more well-informed and better decisions on issues which affect them.

2000

I feel that certain political interests at the municipal level have attempted to collect up people who are considered to be disadvantaged. These people have been led to believe that by voting they can create a mandate for these political interests to effect social change at a municipal level. In my opinion this does not mix with the delivery of municipal services. The voters are being misled. If people want a mandate for social change, I feel they must work to get it at the federal or provincial level, therefore I would like to see a broadly defined provincial constituency to deliver social services.

I am suspicious of a system which delivers welfare payments at a municipal level. Welfare is a social program and should be delivered by the province. Some aspects of welfare could concern the delivery of municipal services and so these could be delivered by a municipality. I feel taxation should be modified to facilitate this reality.

Education is also a type of social program. With new technology development, the delivery of education is changing. To remove funding decisions for education to the provincial level is practical and logical. It should foster uniform provincial standards in education. Having school trustees looking after the purse-strings of our educational system is like retaining the same counsel for the defence and the prosecution of the same case.

I am suspicious of educational do-gooders who offer themselves up to control the finances of our education system. I would like a group of people to look at each financial expenditure dispassionately, impartially at arm's length and in the light of the more broadly stated social picture of a provincial or even federal constituency in conjunction with local needs.

In closing, if we can make a distinction between the delivery of social programs and the delivery of municipal services, and with the latter create a forum where all funding and all program decisions can appear on the same table, amalgamation will be a great success.

With all due respect, I thank the committee for giving me this opportunity to speak in support of amalgamation.

**Mr Hastings:** Thank you, Mr Fortune, for coming in this evening. You say you've been a resident of both North York and the city of Toronto at various times in your life, and it would appear as if you have a good historical appreciation of amalgamation and how it's evolved over the years.

I'd like you to elucidate for us why you believe that if you look back in history all the mayors of Toronto — with the exception of Mr Sewell, the present mayor and possibly one other, from Allan Lampert, Nate Phillips in the 1960s, Phil Givens in the 1970s, Bill Dennison in the 1960s and 1970s, and David Crombie, who it has been suggested is not for amalgamation but in fact is on the record as being so, and yet we have the historical break point in the last few years — the leaders of the city of Toronto wanted amalgamation.

We no longer have that trend in evidence. What do you think has led to the change from all those mayors that had that sort of amalgamation approach to the ones of today who are saying, "We don't want anything to do with an amalgamated city"?

**Mr Fortune:** I don't purport to be an expert in any of these matters and I tried to expunge from my little speech here all inflammatory remarks and that's why it's very general. I was also under the impression — aren't we running short of time?

**Mr Hastings:** We may well be.

**The Vice-Chair:** We have a couple minutes left.

**Mr Fortune:** Do we? Could you please repeat the question?

**Mr Hastings:** In the early years of the Metro federation the leaders of Toronto, the mayors I've mentioned, were generally pro-amalgamation. The present mayor, Mrs Hall, and Mayor Sewell in the later 1970s, were the strongest against amalgamation.

**Mr Fortune:** Wasn't Fred Gardiner, a chair of Metro, against amalgamation? That doesn't really support your theory.

**Mr Hastings:** No, he was for it as the reeve of Forest Hill.

**Mr Fortune:** I've heard him quoted as being against it. In fact, I've heard him interviewed on it.

**Mr Hastings:** He could have been, like Mr Colle, back in a previous life.

**Mr Fortune:** He was in the same situation you're in now. He had a constituency to report to and he was sensitive to the issues of his constituents.

**Mr Hastings:** Let me ask you this finally then. You talk about centralization. That's a major concern of a lot of people, that most functions of service delivery will be centralized, that everything will have to be downtown, whether you want to access a skating program or what have you. Do you think that's really necessary or do you think we can have a centralized political decision-making model but a decentralized service delivery model?

**Mr Fortune:** I don't think the present administration has suggested that we create a specific location for the so-called centralized services. By the same token, in our society today, with the mass communication that we possess, we have tremendous potential for centralization; but at the same time there is also tremendous potential for decentralization. The difference between what we face now and 100 years ago is that this can go on simultaneously.

**Mr Newman:** I have a quick question, Mr Fortune, if you could briefly comment on the referendum process within the six municipalities, and more specifically within the city of Toronto. Also as a taxpayer in the city of Toronto, how do you feel about your tax dollars being spent to fund one side of the issue, the No side, a side that you do not support personally?

**Mr Fortune:** I own property in the city of Toronto and I operate a business as well. My feeling about the referendum, bluntly: I voted for a provincial administration that I felt would undertake what I felt was necessary as a voter, as a constituent of Ontario. As far as I'm concerned, the municipality is incorporated under the laws of Ontario, so their force of law emanates from the province or the statutes that the provincial Legislature has enacted. I'm somewhat annoyed that they took my money and launched a No campaign. I haven't looked into that —

**The Vice-Chair:** I have to interrupt you here. Thank you very much. We've run out of time.

#### STEWART LYONS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Stewart Lyons, who is next. Good evening, Mr Lyons, and welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Mr Stewart Lyons:** As a student and North York resident, I would like to express my position as being wholly in favour of amalgamation. It is my opinion that this government should be commended for at least having the courage and gumption to deal with the duplication of resources that exists in Metro Toronto. To myself it seems clear that Metro does not need seven mayors, councils and 106 municipal politicians. It has been disappointing, to say the least, to watch, for example, North York compete with Toronto for businesses and opportunity or vice versa. That practice is counterproductive, it is wasteful and it must stop. A unified city can work together as one harmonious unit seeking to achieve a more prosperous and vibrant Toronto for all of us.

Police, ambulance service, public works and many other services are already centralized. Currently 72% of municipal spending in Metro Toronto already goes to services delivered Metro-wide — or 54%, like the other woman said; doesn't make a difference to my opinion. Surely the natural continuation of this logical process will not result in the overnight deterioration of the civic pride that makes Toronto a splendid place to live. I find it difficult to agree with the opponents who would have me believe that the morning after the passage of Bill 103, we will find ourselves living in a post-apocalyptic urban nightmare. Truthfully I feel the changes will be mostly cosmetic, invisible to the average Torontonian, and the absence of frivolous extravagance will not bother any one of us.

**2010**

In the fiscally restrained 1990s there are new realities. We must look to all areas of government to find savings. The KPMG studies reveal that there is a decent chance that \$865 million could be saved over the first three years plus an additional \$300 million a year by the year 2000. This fact cannot be ignored, and just because KPMG wants to protect itself by not providing a guarantee does not mean the numbers should be discarded.

Those who oppose amalgamation would argue that as a citizen of North York, I should not have such a strong say in the goings-on in the City of Toronto. That is unrealistic. Toronto is not that geographically large, and no one who lives in the surrounding cities or boroughs actually lives that far from the arbitrary geographical borders of Toronto. I spend a great bulk of my time in the downtown core, as do many other suburbanians. We must all take pride and responsibility for the entire city. We must look towards common goals and cease this divisive behaviour.

I don't agree that our communities will suffer as a result of amalgamation. Cabbagetown, High Park, Forest Hill and such have been around a long time and are not defined by the boundaries of their local wards. These communities have survived the formation of Metro council, and I see no reason why they would not survive amalgamation. Additionally the six community councils that will be created by Bill 103 will ensure that local input continues through ward representation and the creation of neighbourhood committees that will be directly involved in the governing process. Also, it should not be forgotten that people create communities, not their municipal governments.

For those who say that this process is undemocratic, I would like to point out that this government stated it would make changes to municipalities in order to find cost savings and that this is completely within this provincial government's realm of jurisdiction. Additionally, no one could be so Toronto-minded as to lose sight of the fact that this government is there to make decisions that help the entire province. Torontonians shouldn't be so selfish as to think they are untouchable. I highly doubt these democracy soldiers would bat an eye if the issue was the amalgamation of Hamilton-Wentworth.

From my observation of those who oppose amalgamation, I have noticed many of them are middle-aged or older. I can appreciate their concerns over what they might lose. However, as a young person I don't have the luxury of being able to concern myself with the short-term future exclusively, nor can I afford to be fearful of change. I have to look towards what I might gain, and not just over the short term but into the far future, long after many opponents of amalgamation are gone. Furthermore I would be so bold as to argue that the majority of young people feel exactly the same way as I.

We taxpayers are currently supporting seven municipal governments here in our city. I submit that this is simply too great a burden to continue. The bureaucracy and inefficiency of our current system, with its 180,000-plus bylaws, is absurd. Rather than working together to function for the greatest good, our city politicians spend our time protecting their turf. Rather than operating as an

effective civic machine, this costly municipal hodgepodge is a sluggish weight borne by the citizenry. We need a better system of local government; we deserve a better system of local government. All in all I support Bill 103 for a very simple reason: It makes sense.

Thank you and good evening.

**Mr Colle:** Just one question: Where in Bill 103 does it say there are going to be six community councils created?

**Mr Lyons:** I don't have a copy of Bill 103 but I was under that impression from what I've read about it. That's what I've heard.

**Mr Colle:** Where did you get that from?

**Mr Lyons:** General reports from people. That's the impression that I —

**Mr Colle:** It's pretty specific, six councils.

**Mr Lyons:** That's what I've heard.

**Mr Newman:** There was a Globe and Mail article, I think.

**Mr Lyons:** Yes, there was the Globe and Mail. That's one of the sources, actually.

**Hon Al Leach (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** Or my speech.

**Mr Lyons:** I tend to read the Globe and Mail. I try to avoid the Star.

**Mr Colle:** You mention how terrible things are in Toronto. If things are so terrible in Metro —

**Mr Lyons:** I didn't say that things are terrible in Metro. I said there's bureaucracy and waste; I didn't say things are terrible. I said it's a great place to live. It's a vibrant city.

**Mr Colle:** Why would you risk creating this big bureaucracy when we've been called one of the best places to live? If things had been so mismanaged, why is it such a good place to live? Why is it so vibrant?

**Mr Lyons:** I'm not saying it's been mismanaged. I didn't say that either. I just said it's a little bit overly bureaucratic. I think that decreasing the number of city politicians from 106 to 44 would only help matters. I don't think it would create a bigger bureaucracy, it would just officially be bigger, but in terms of cost savings it would be less. I think it would be a lot easier to get things done with a smaller council instead of having seven councils in a Metro municipal —

**Mr Colle:** If you're creating a government the size of Alberta, how are you going to avoid creating one of the biggest bureaucracies of any city government in North America?

**Mr Lyons:** What do you mean? Because it's 2.3 million people, the size of Alberta?

**Mr Colle:** Yes.

**Mr Lyons:** I don't know, there are many cities around the world, and that 2.3 million people is not a completely unrealistic figure. There are cities around the world, and granted those aren't the greatest cities, but that's not necessarily to do with the number of people they have. There are a lot of cities in the world that are larger than 2.3 million people that operate as one government.

**Mr Colle:** I think Mike Harris himself said, "As you get bigger government, you get bigger bureaucracy and they become more expensive." So if you're interested in saving costs — oh yes, you also mentioned you didn't

like the competition. What's wrong with competition between cities?

**Mr Lyons:** Don't you think it's a little counter-productive for North York to be competing with Toronto when they're 10 kilometres apart? Why shouldn't Toronto be competing with other portions of the greater Toronto area, or not even the greater Toronto area, just portions of Metropolitan Toronto? It's sort of contradictory. They serve together on one council, Metro council, and all of a sudden they're opposed on every other local issue. I think it's ridiculous that they compete —

**Mr Colle:** Don't you think what Mel Lastman has done to Yonge Street is proof that sometimes competition is good? As a result of that competition, we've got a city centre in the northern end of Metro.

**Mr Lyons:** I don't think that's necessarily just because of the competition. I think North York is a good city just because it happened to be turning out to be a good city. He did a lot of good work and it has grown well but there's no need to think it couldn't be a good city under amalgamation. I think it would still continue to be a good city.

**Mr Colle:** It wouldn't be a city any more.

**Mr Lyons:** Well, good area, how's that? Part of Toronto.

**Mr Colle:** Just part of Toronto.

**Mr Lyons:** Yes.

**Mr Colle:** Okay, and then you said there's something to do with age, that young people favour amalgamation and old people are against it. Is that what —

**Mr Lyons:** I said "many of the proponents are middle-aged or older." I didn't say everyone.

**Mr Colle:** What do you base that on, a Globe and Mail article too?

**Mr Lyons:** No, not on a Globe and Mail article actually. I've watched some of the committee hearings and just from what I've seen on television. I'm not saying that's a bad thing at all. Rightly so, they're fearful of change; they're fearful of what they might lose. There's nothing wrong with that. That's a good thing. I'm just saying that maybe they're too fearful of change and they're too afraid to try something new.

**Mr Colle:** So it's older people who are afraid of change. That's why they're against amalgamation?

**Mr Lyons:** No, I'm not saying that as a general statement. I'm just saying that many of the opponents happen to be older and many of those people happen to be fearful of change.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here this evening.

#### TONY O'DONOHUE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Tony O'Donohue. Good evening, Mr O'Donohue, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mr Tony O'Donohue:** I've got nine pages, Madam Chair, and I may not be able to get through it all but I'll do my best.

**The Vice-Chair:** All right. Thank you very much.

**Mr O'Donohue:** I'm appearing before you tonight as a former municipal politician who served 26 years on

Toronto city council and 15 years on Metro council. I'm also appearing before you as a professional engineer with many years' experience in the hard services, particularly water, sewage, transportation, waste etc, which are basic to the operation of municipalities.

I am not appearing before you as a former politician leading a band of rabble-rousers, claiming that we are the only ones with the light who know the way. I am not depending on a monthly paycheque from any local government. That gives me independence and enables me to speak frankly and without a conflict.

I was first elected to Metro and city councils in December 1966. The three-year period before that I had been a works engineer with the then township of Scarborough, responsible for the provision of sewers, watermains and roads for a rapidly expanding municipality.

Goldenberg had just brought in his report on Metropolitan Toronto. It was the first review since the formation of Metro in 1953. His recommendations led to more power for the Metro government. It also gave political control to the suburban members for the first time. This alarmed city politicians. They planned to do something about it. Metro must not be allowed to dominate.

A plan was formulated to fight for total amalgamation. At the first opportunity, which was the municipal election of 1969, Toronto city council placed the amalgamation question on the ballot. We thought that a solid Yes vote would convince Premier John Robarts that amalgamation was the solution.

#### Interruption.

**The Vice-Chair:** Could I ask for silence in the back there, please. Sorry, Mr O'Donohue.

**Mr O'Donohue:** I felt good about it as I knew that amalgamation would streamline services, cut down on duplication, waste and red tape. It would make local government more understood, and most of all for the average citizen, it would be easier to use and therefore user-friendly. If done right, it would save the taxpayers a lot of money.

Generally the people knew that an efficient and understandable one level of local government with less bureaucracy was what they wanted. It was not a hard sell during that election. When the ballots were read, 101,163 voted yes and 22,390 voted no, 82% in favour of amalgamation. But that went nowhere, as the Premier turned it all down.

There were some amendments in the intervening years. The last amendment was Bill 29, which was given royal assent in February 1988, and that called for direct election to Metro council. It went through easily without debate, as it catered to the wishes of local politicians. No wonder. It meant more money, more assistance to politicians and more politicians.

#### 2020

City of Toronto councillors, ever wary of Metro replacing them, had one more shot at getting rid of Metro, by placing the question on the ballot in the November 1994 municipal election, and it was a squeaker really for the Yes vote at that time. The thinking of the majority of city council was that Metro was the enemy and Metro had to go. Some councillors were paranoid about Metro. We could see the writing on the wall, that

one day the province would wake up and realize that the two-tier mess would indeed disappear. Calling for the elimination of Metro was a pre-emptive strike.

I reluctantly supported the Yes position of the city after attempting to change the wording to call for one level of local government. I eventually concluded that it did not accurately represent my preference and I took no further action during the campaign, but my preference was amalgamation and always has been since 1969.

The financial and operational reasons for amalgamation are more valid today than they ever were. All the major cross-boundary services are now in place. Police, transit and social services as well have been amalgamated. One city government is the logical final step. But the political problems are much different today than they were in the past. Over the years the suburbs grew stronger and the city of Toronto political base declined steadily. It now means the politicians in the downtown clam shell do not have control any more.

Bill 103 is a devastating blow to local politicians. It means that 61 fewer local politicians will be required. That means a savings of \$9 million annually for the taxpayers. It now means the survival of the fittest in the November election, a topic which dominates the conversations of all city politicians today. No wonder local politicians, especially those who are vulnerable, are all screaming blue murder and spending our tax dollars to fight amalgamation. No one wants to be made redundant. It is really a matter of losing a well-paid job with lots of frills. It would be difficult now for many local councillors, in this economic climate, to enter the workforce, get a job and make the salaries they now make.

I am disappointed that the amalgamation legislation as outlined in Bill 103 has been twisted by those who oppose it. I recently received a pamphlet in the mail from Councillor Kay Gardner, with the massive headline "Mega-City: Mega-Taxes: 10% Tax Increase in 1998; Save Our City Rally." I found the pamphlet offensive, dishonest and a blatant attempt to misinform the residents. Worst of all, my tax dollars were paying for this, and that hurt.

As a councillor, I used to feel embarrassed to tell an unfortunate constituent about all the procedures to get the simplest request approved or explain why it may not be approved. I have a list of about seven or eight here and I know I don't have time to go through them, but I'll mention two. The first one, the most recent example of municipal malaise, can be found in the different bylaws for smoking in restaurants. Not only is it confusing to patrons but it is a downer for any restaurant trying to run a business. Imagine the confusion and stupidity of six different smoking bylaws. The solution is fairly obvious: amalgamation — one city, one bylaw.

I'll give another one for the benefit of Mr Colle: the Cross Town Service Station at the northeast corner of St Clair and Bathurst. The St Clair frontage is in the city of Toronto and the Bathurst frontage is in York. The York gasoline bylaw allows the pumps to be open 24 hours a day and the city of Toronto bylaw makes them close at 7. So what happens? They had to remove the pumps on the city of Toronto side.

I have a list in appendix A from pages 6 to 9, two specific examples why the present two-tier system has wasted millions of dollars. The details of the Front Street extension and the western Beaches should be read by anybody interested in cleaning up local politics.

Those who are now vehemently opposed to amalgamation are involved in local politics and work for a local government, mainly the NDP and CUPE. Many others are long-time city hall addicts who have developed their connections over the years. Others depend on the grants and handouts from the system. In these circumstances it is difficult to imagine them going away quietly and accepting the proposed change.

But take away all the rhetoric, and Bill 103, if properly implemented, will be a financial relief for the system users and taxpayers. The success of amalgamation will depend on the hands-on ability of the transition team, and I have some suggestions for that: (1) make sure they are working in the interests of the taxpayers; (2) realize operating cost savings; (3) an amalgamated department cannot exceed the sum total of the capital costs of the individual departments prior to amalgamation; (4) topping up to the maximum wage rate will not be allowed; (5) early retirement packages and attrition should be the norm; (6) the transition team should be in place for at least the first year of the new council.

In conclusion, I would say slowing down the process to escape the November civic election is a ploy which has been voiced by Mayor Barbara Hall and her supporters. Premier Mike Harris should proceed as planned and adopt Bill 103 with a few amendments, but amalgamation should take place as planned for January 1, 1998.

The provincial government should make a commitment on the other downloading proposals for a total review with the objective of making the final package revenue-neutral for the property taxpayer. The transition team should be given the mandate to ensure that amalgamation will save much money for the taxpayer.

Finally, the referendum is a farce. It is a total manipulation by those who want to kill Bill 103. I am sure many dead people will send in their ballots, since the ballot does not require a signature. Even the referendum process is worse than the polling for front yard parking or for a boulevard patio cafe. At least there the voter has to sign the ballot.

Thank you for your attention.

**Mr Pouliot:** Thank you very kindly, Mr O'Donohue. Do you believe that Bill 103, the proposal for amalgamation, is as much a transfer of fiscal responsibility as it is a transfer of political representation and responsibility? Do you believe it is both?

**Mr O'Donohue:** Unfortunately, I think that has been totally confused. Bill 103 has nothing at all to do with services. It simply deals with the political realities of Metro, nothing else.

**Mr Pouliot:** I see.

**Mr O'Donohue:** Anybody that reads anything into it other than that is just manipulating the system, and unfortunately this has happened in the so-called referendum.

**Mr Pouliot:** Without being a cynic and without imputing motives, do you believe that it gives the government, through the auspices of Bill 103, an opportunity to

evoke some mechanism that makes it possible, for instance, to make an exchange without revenue-neutrality of responsibility to education?

For instance, the government is about to deliver anywhere between \$650 million and \$900 million on education. It cannot do it by way of school boards. This will only give them an opportunity for \$125 million to \$150 million. By having an action directe, a one-on-one relationship with the teachers, since they are the boss now, then they can go to the salary, they can go to the pension plan responsibility of the employer and get the \$800 million and \$300 million as a sideshow from the city of Toronto.

**Mr O'Donohue:** I would hope that when that side of the equation is looked at — and it has nothing to do with Bill 103. Bill 103 stands on its own. Make no mistake about that. But the question of education, social services, that should come out revenue-neutral, and I think that would probably take place over a few years. It won't happen tomorrow. But I don't think the —

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry to interrupt. We've gone past your time. Thank you very much, Mr O'Donohue.

#### JOHN LONG

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on John Long. Good evening, Mr Long, and welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Mr John Long:** Good evening, Madam Chairperson. I would like to take this opportunity to address the honourable members on the provincial government committee dealing with the bill to amalgamate the municipalities of Metropolitan Toronto into one city. I support this action as a good idea that is long overdue and the logical conclusion from the original creation of Metro Toronto over 40 years ago.

This is the first time I've appeared in this type of forum. I was concerned that the pro-amalgamation side would not be heard, from early committee hearings, but I've heard that there have been people supporting as well. I will give you the reasons why I support the amalgamation of Metro Toronto.

The region of Metropolitan Toronto is one economic unit. No matter where you are from in the Metro region to the rest of the country and the rest of the world you are from Toronto. It is time that the political reality recognized the economic reality. We need a unified city council that will work together to advance this economic unit rather than working against each other.

**2030**

I also believe the present boundaries within Metro Toronto do not make sense. It can be hard to tell when one crosses boundaries. In many cases, these boundaries do not correspond to major highways or waterways. Roads can cross differing jurisdictions and be subject to differing policies.

The current boundaries within Metro also do not correspond to neighbourhoods. If one wanted to protect neighbourhoods to the utmost, one would really have to create 25 to 30 cities with populations of between 50,000 and 100,000 each. Does this make economic sense? Some may say so, but I don't think so. I don't believe that

neighbourhoods are better protected by four or six cities than by one unified city. I believe they will still exist after amalgamation.

Before complete amalgamation I considered other alternatives such as eliminating Metro Toronto and going to a four-city model. I had some trouble drawing logical boundaries and still having four cities of near equal size. I also had trouble deciding how to split up already integrated services.

Therefore, I concluded it is better to eliminate the six suburbs rather than the Metro level itself since I believe that in the areas of roads, public transit, police, fire and emergency services, co-ordination is essential. Removing only the Metro level government in Toronto without any further consolidation would only remove one bureaucracy instead of six and cause more confusion.

I believe it is harder to disentangle currently integrated Metro services than to merge separate city services. The complete amalgamation of Metro Toronto would reduce duplication of services and jurisdictional disputes. Since Metro Toronto is basically urban, amalgamation should not cause the problems when urban and rural areas were merged elsewhere. Many people talk about the Halifax situation. We're not the same. The amalgamated city's area will still be fairly compact and well-defined.

I do not see saving money as the principal reason for amalgamation, but I believe that in the long run it would save money, though there will probably be short-term startup costs. Though the overall number of civic employees at the line level may not be reduced by much, there would have to be savings from the reduction of councillors and administrative managers. Instead of six or seven managers in some positions, you may only have one manager. As well, fewer or smaller buildings would be required.

In closing, I am disappointed by the actions of the mayors, councillors and their supporters on the local councils in Metro Toronto, especially downtown, who are opposing amalgamation. They'd like you to believe that amalgamation would be a major catastrophe. I guess they haven't attributed earthquake or asteroid attack to it; however, there's been a lot of complaints. I don't believe them. I believe many of the people are more concerned about the potential loss of influence and dilution of support they will have in an amalgamated city.

Now I do support the right of these councils to hold their referenda, but I have concerns over the conduct of these votes. I expect the referenda results to be overwhelmingly against amalgamation, whether or not that is the true opinion on this issue. Let's face it, both the question and the method of voting were chosen by the anti-amalgamation side and almost all the advertising being sent to homes is anti-amalgamation. Furthermore, the councils are only financing the anti-amalgamation forces and the collection and counting of ballots is generally being handled by those opposed to amalgamation.

This concludes my remarks. I just want to say I hope amalgamation succeeds. If anyone has any questions, I have other information if anyone wants to call me with any questions, and there is my home address.

**Mr Newman:** Thank you, Mr Long, for appearing before the committee this evening. I want to focus my

questioning on the last part of your presentation and I quote you, "Now I do support the right of these councils to hold their referenda." Should these results be considered binding?

**Mr Long:** I have trouble considering them binding because of the way the referenda are being held. If you want to have a binding referendum, that would have to be something where both sides should be getting together and agreeing on the question. If there's going to be financing, it should be equal to both sides — taxpayer financing. There should be No and Yes committees set up; maybe the method of balloting; scrutineers from the pro-amalgamation side should be allowed. None of this has occurred. It doesn't seem to be a completely balanced referendum in my opinion.

**Mr Newman:** Okay, because you further go on to say: "Let's face it, both the question and the method of voting were chosen by the anti-amalgamation side," and then you go on, "Furthermore, the councils are only financing the anti-amalgamation forces and the collection and counting of ballots is generally being handled by those opposed to amalgamation," but you don't mention how you feel as a taxpayer, that your tax dollars —

**Mr Long:** I wasn't very happy. I wrote my mayor about that and of course she didn't reply. Well, I shouldn't say — maybe she will, maybe it's in the mail. I've written all the mayors in fact about this whole method and told them I didn't like the way it was being done.

**Mr Newman:** You don't like the way your tax dollars are being spent in this issue?

**Mr Long:** No.

**Mr Flaherty:** Thanks, Mr Long, for being here this evening. I was interested in your comment about a strong urban core because one of the previous presenters today talked about the Crombie report recommendations in a letter in December about maintaining a strong urban core, "The panel was unanimous in endorsing the importance of a strong urban core, with views on strengthening the core ranging from one city to four." I take it you looked at the four-city option.

**Mr Long:** I did look at it. Like I said, one of the problems with breaking things up — if we go to four cities and you're going to get away from Metro, does that mean four police forces, four emergency forces? Do we start breaking everything up? I also have a little trouble with the boundaries. Realistically, if we're going to draw the four-city boundaries, the so-called central boundary I would take all the way up to the 401, but then I think the guys up in North York wouldn't be too happy about that because it would be on an unequal — that's one thing I had some problems with in the four-city solution.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Long, for coming here this evening.

### MAY WILSON

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on May Wilson. Good evening, Mrs Wilson, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mrs May Wilson:** Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to appear before this committee. I'm

in support of amalgamation and I've lived in Metro Toronto for over 40 years and I've got grey hair. I've watched this population grow from around 800,000 people at first, and I'm very proud of what I see today. That may be detrimental in what you may ask me later, but I am proud of Toronto. But we've been prepared to change as we've gone through. We haven't started off without change; we've changed as we've gone through from Metropolitan Toronto.

I first lived in the city of Toronto and then moved to the township of North York, then I went into the borough of North York, and now I'm in the city of North York. This has gone on and things have been changed, and it has not been a problem as we've gone through those changes. I'm not afraid of change. I encompass change because if it has to be and is good for the city, for the Metropolitan area, we should change.

### 2040

I was privileged to work for eight years throughout the whole of Metropolitan Toronto interviewing in neighbourhoods for York University. During that time, I got to really understand the various pockets of ethnic groups throughout Metro and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was wonderful. I was very lucky to have that experience, to go into the areas of downtown Toronto, to go into the ethnic areas and to meet the people. It was something that was a tremendous pleasure to me. I learned a lot about Metro, and I learned to grow and love it, but I also learned to understand it when I did that. It was an unusual thing for someone to do.

People should not fear because of change. I feel that at this time we need to change again. We now need to move forward and amalgamate.

If I go out of Metro Toronto and someone in New Brunswick asks me, "Where do you come from?" and I tell them it's North York, they don't know where North York is, so I have to explain to them it's Toronto. Then they understand where I come from. The same applies if I go to BC, exactly the same, and particularly if I go out of Canada. I come from Toronto, but Ontario and Canada are my home.

I'd like to see us move forward into an integrated Toronto and go for the 2008 Olympic Games. We tried for the Olympic Games in 1996, but there was infighting at that time, and I honestly don't believe we could have got it, because part of the infighting was there. I would like to see this as part of a unity, to try to move forward with Metro with a goal to go forward as the city of Toronto, between all the municipalities.

I realize that I'm not taking your 10 minutes, but I really felt that by the end of the evening you would be weary of hearing a lot of comments from people. I thank you for your time.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs Wilson. Mr Colle.

**Mr Colle:** I have a question about your desire to get the Olympics here.

**Mrs Wilson:** It's a goal. I think we should have a goal for Toronto. It would publicize Toronto as a city throughout the world, and I would like to see that. I'm proud of Toronto and I'm proud of Canada, and I think whatever

we do in Toronto is important for Ontario and is important for Canada.

**Mr Colle:** There are cities that have recently got the Olympics that were not amalgamated cities. Sydney, Australia, has 40 municipalities. Atlanta is not an amalgamated city. They still got the Olympics.

**Mrs Wilson:** That's not my point. I was trying to make the point that by having a goal it would help to integrate everybody. At the present time, with the number of individual councils and the arguments that would go on between them, if we had a goal to work towards, then we would have a much greater chance of amalgamating, because indirectly everybody would have to pull together.

**Mr Colle:** You're talking about pulling together and integrating people. There are a lot of people — you disagree with them, obviously — who feel they haven't been given a say in the future of their city or of their communities; that in fact they've been told by the Premier and by the minister that they won't listen to the referendum results, that they'll disregard them, that the referendums are not to their liking.

**Mrs Wilson:** Mr Colle, may I interrupt you for one minute? Today I spoke to somebody on the phone, and we had just got our PIN numbers in North York. This lady said to me, "My husband died three years ago, and he has been given a PIN number." Is that a referendum? I spoke to somebody yesterday. Their son got one, and he's not 18. Is that a referendum?

**Mr Colle:** It's not a perfect system. In every election there are people who perhaps die before or after the —

**Mrs Wilson:** This is three years ago.

**Mr Colle:** That's when the provincial lists were out. The referendums aren't perfect, but when you have nothing else, why are you denying people —

**Mrs Wilson:** You said it; I didn't.

**Mr Colle:** — and I think it's funny. Some people don't think it's funny; they think it's very sad they are being denied the right to have a say in the future of their city, whether referendum or not. Unlike you, they feel very upset about being forced to accept this with no other option.

I'm asking you: Don't you think you should appreciate that they also feel that this should not be forced upon them, that there should be consensus and that people should be part of the solution and not told, "We're not going to listen to you"?

**Mrs Wilson:** I think everybody has been given the opportunity to come down and speak here, just as I was given the opportunity, and I really appreciate that; that's number one. Everybody has been able to go to town hall meetings and they have been able to speak there too, and then you have the opportunity and you've been given the opportunity of the referendum.

**Mr Colle:** Yes, but the government says it's not going to listen no matter what the results are.

**Mrs Wilson:** But the referenda, as you know, are not true referenda.

**Mr Colle:** The government had an opportunity to have its referendum and it refused to cooperate in putting up a referendum because it said: "We don't recognize a referendum in this case. It's too complicated."

**Mrs Wilson:** You know, there's another thing, Mr Colle, and I'm going to say this straight to you: People are afraid to speak out in support because they're afraid of being barked down by some people.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs Wilson, for appearing here this evening.

### MARGARET ZEIDLER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Margaret Zeidler, please. Good evening, Ms Zeidler, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Margaret Zeidler:** Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee, for this opportunity. Whether or not one is a Torontonian and whether or not one supports the amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto, I believe we must speak out against Bill 103.

Bill 103 isn't so much about amalgamation as it is about the removal of democracy at the local level. I am happy to report that many non-Torontonians are standing up on our behalf because they realize the injustice of what this government is doing to Toronto with no clear mandate.

When I first heard of the plan to amalgamate Toronto, North York, Etobicoke, Scarborough, York and East York late last year — I must say it did come quite out of the blue — I, like any citizen in a democracy, took it upon myself to become informed on the issues.

Being an architect and a lover of cities, I am terrifically interested in these issues. Cities are the generators of immense creativity, diversity and culture, not to mention the engines of regional and national economies.

So I read the newspapers, I read the reports, as much literature as I could get my hands on. I spoke to as many knowledgeable and wise souls as I could find to become informed on the good reasons for amalgamation. I went to town hall meetings and ratepayer meetings, and I'm frankly becoming exhausted looking for the facts which might indicate that this proposal is a good idea.

This morning, the Premier was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* as saying that people are still confused about this process. The insults to our intelligence never cease. We are not confused.

The committee has already heard around 300 deputations and I believe an overwhelming number have been against Bill 103. Many of these deputations have been given by people who are widely respected, in many cases the world over, as leading thinkers and doers in urban philosophy, economy, culture and community.

Yet the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Al Leach, when asked by a reporter some weeks ago, was unable to name even one study produced in the past 30 years which recommends the amalgamation of the six municipalities into a single-tiered, large municipality. There isn't one and yet he and other ministers in this government, like my own member Isabel Bassett, continue to go to community meetings and say, "All the studies show this is the right thing to do." It truly irritates me that they believe we, their constituents, are so naïve and simple-minded as to accept this pap with all the hard evidence to the contrary.

This proposal means Toronto will become less accountable, less responsive and more susceptible to special interests, although having watched the performance of this government in the past months, I am not quite sure whether they would consider these failings a drawback.

There are other minuses for amalgamation; I'm sure you've heard about them in the past weeks. Against all this the government has continually cited one overriding pro: efficiency and fiscal restraint. An excellent goal. No one would disagree with this goal.

Unfortunately, the evidence is clear that amalgamated governments are not more cost-efficient. In a study of US cities, it has been shown that the larger the city, the less efficient it becomes financially. In cities with a population of over one million, 21% more is spent per capita than in cities with half a million to a million people. Amalgamated cities fare even worse. They spend 112% more per capita if they are over a million people, versus amalgamated cities between half a million and a million in population.

#### 2050

"Why?" I keep asking myself in light of all this evidence. It could be a disaster for the city of Toronto even if it were carefully and thoughtfully brought into being, which it is not. Why would the government pursue such an obviously bad idea and continue at breakneck speed to ram this untried and untested concept through when there is no hard evidence whatsoever, no precedent anywhere, that we will be able to maintain the quality of life in our city or even save money? Indeed all the evidence points to the likelihood that we will destroy what we cherish most in Toronto: its wonderful communities.

There is an answer to this question, "Why?" The government has a hidden agenda. This bill has nothing to do with making Toronto more financially efficient. I don't believe that this government even cares about Toronto's financial situation. What they care about is that this amalgamation provides a marvellous opportunity to cut provincial funding.

In the past two years they have been unable to come up with the necessary savings within their own jurisdiction to cut the income tax as much as promised, and have come upon this idea as their way to make good on an election promise to cut the income tax in the province by 30%.

Under the guise of efficiency, the government is dumping over \$1 billion of its responsibilities on to the municipalities in order to meet an election promise that it is unable to achieve on its own. This bill is really not about amalgamation; it is about a complete contempt and disrespect for democracy.

The bill transfers to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and his appointees the authority to overrule the decisions of our elected officials, the representatives and municipal representatives we elected just two years ago. It allows the minister to establish the conditions and staff with which the new council will function, with no right of appeal, not even by recourse to the courts.

It gets worse: The bill provides no time limit on the exercise of these powers. The minister may, but is not required to, dissolve the board of trustees and the transi-

tion team. If this bill becomes law, it would be within the rights of the minister to subject the elected council of the new amalgamated city to the board and team indefinitely.

I am shocked. This doesn't sound like Canada; it sounds like the workings of the current government in Kenya or the USSR 20 years ago, both of which I have had the heartbreaking experience of witnessing first hand.

To every cloud there is a silver lining. When all this talk of amalgamation began, it became clear that the facts and precedents proved that it would be disastrous for Toronto. The Conservatives were determined to push it through, arrogantly announcing they were not interested in what the people thought. I feared that apathy and inertia, two very powerful forces in our society at this time, would take over. The complete opposite has happened.

I can't begin to tell you how thrilled I am to see the extraordinary grass-roots effort that has developed in the past two months, and which is growing by the minute, as more people become informed, aware and ultimately horrified by the facts and the real issues.

It gives me great confidence to know that even if this government does push this bill ahead, these energetic and committed citizens will go forward and take whatever means are necessary to protect their city. I can promise you that I will be there with them doing everything I possibly can to make sure that Toronto is not destroyed and that we are not deprived of our democratic rights.

I respectfully urge this committee to recommend that the government withdraw Bill 103, thereby forcing it to behave in a democratic and consensus-building fashion to gain the mandate of the people of Metropolitan Toronto and then go about studying what the best and brightest minds in this city and around the world are saying on these issues. Or they could just use the Golden report, which was prepared in this way, so that we may build an even better and more prosperous Toronto that will continue to be seen around the world as a model of all that can be good about cities, a Toronto that will continue to be cited in the international press as the best city in the world to live and locate a business, a city that will be safe and culturally vibrant with a strong sense of community and democratic ideals.

**Mr Flaherty:** Ms Zeidler, thank you for coming this evening and sharing your views about the proposed legislation. I think you said there were no studies that supported the amalgamation concept. I want to raise with you the concept of the hole in the doughnut that we've seen happen in some American cities, where the tax base erodes in the urban core and it becomes that hole in the doughnut, and to go back to Anne Golden's report last year, where she recommended a GTA government with a strong core city, and then the Who Does What Crombie report in December, which recommended a Greater Toronto Services Board and the importance of a strong urban core with one city to four cities.

In that sense I differ from you when you say no studies have supported this concept. It seems to me that both of those studies came to the conclusion that we need a strong urban core, although Mr Crombie's panel would have said somewhere between one to four cities, and they

couldn't agree on that. Do you agree with the concept, the need for the strong urban core?

**Margaret Zeidler:** These reports that you're citing did not come out in favour of amalgamation. They were talking about a larger coordination in the greater Toronto area. This does not address that issue, and furthermore, it takes away the rights of local democracies. Anne Golden —

**Mr Flaherty:** Do you agree with the concept of a strong urban core as being essential for this structure to function properly so we don't end up with that unfortunate phenomenon of the hole in the doughnut surrounded by wealthy suburbs?

**Margaret Zeidler:** We are going to end up with a hole in the doughnut if amalgamation goes through, I'm afraid to say.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Zeidler. We've run out of time.

### RON FARROW

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Mr Ron Farrow. Good evening, Mr Farrow, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Ron Farrow:** Thank you very much. I have a shortened reading speech here, so I'll plunge right in. My name is Ron Farrow. I teach politics, not accountancy, at the University of Western Ontario and I needn't tell seasoned politicians that political arguments aren't always arguments between right and wrong; they're very often arguments between two rights: for example, the protection of the environment and the creation of jobs, worthwhile objects but sometimes in conflict. We have to make choices and we have to try to bring balance to our political stewardship, and that's what we have to do, I think, in this case.

I support, with certain qualifiers, the general direction of Bill 103. I came to that conclusion after I read the Golden report and considered the government's apparent response to it. It seemed to me that we had a choice: We consolidate or we fragment. Given that choice, I'll take consolidation. You've heard from Jane Jacobs and Golden: Both would have us return to parochial shells. This is not the kind of thinking that's made this area the envy of the world.

The central point of our Metro and regional consolidations is the fairer sharing of the costs and benefits of the wider community through Metro and regional budgets. Many American delegations have come here over the years who are desperately concerned about their fragmented municipal structures, abandonment and decay of the urban core. They would kill for the ability to adopt those consolidation measures, but they are paralysed by the presence of referendum laws, among other inhibitors.

2100

Then we have that clarion of democracy, John Sewell. "Clarion: a shrill, narrow-tubed war trumpet." This is the same John Sewell who persuaded the NDP government to allow the OMB to make final decisions in planning matters. Professor Michael Keating commented:

"These (planning) matters are inherently political, involving policy choice and the allocation of public

resources. They should therefore be entrusted to elected and accountable bodies and not to an appointed quasi-judicial agency such as the OMB."

Sewell's response to this criticism: "Well, people like the OMB." People are fickle, aren't they? John Sewell was the author of this testament to local democracy.

We've heard all sides of the meaning and impact of size and delivery of services. Surely municipal government is more than a service delivery mechanism; it's not an automatic vending machine, an idea that seems to be lost on some of my colleagues in academe. So easily it rolls off the lips, "Bigger isn't better." But bigger is. It seems to me that certainly in Metro Toronto and beyond we are all in this leaky boat together and we should search for ways to have effective, more efficient democratic government, not fragmented and destructively competitive government.

There are many self-appointed experts on democracy. In fact, as a society we haven't argued it through completely. It's a work in progress.

Many people have some serious concerns about the motives of this government, indeed all governments of the western world. Deficits must be addressed, but as they are, the gaps between rich and poor continue dramatically to widen. This, in my view, is the real threat to democracy.

You've heard many conflicting views, but cost will be a function of the final division of functions and responsibilities and the budget choices that future politicians make.

When I was peddling regional government years ago, I was asked a thousand times by local politicians, "How much will regional government cost?" My response, "If I can answer that, we won't need you." The provincial government must be sensitive, however, to the concern about responsibilities they will expect local government to meet. In this respect, I for one will be more than willing to forgive the government if it doesn't keep its promise of a tax cut. Tom Kierans was right. I've heard many complaints about the impact of the tax cut. I have not heard an expressed willingness to forgo it. Government should be more efficient, but it must be more humane. Amalgamation should not be a purge of jobs but rather a blending, and reductions as much by attrition as possible. Cheap government is not necessarily good government.

Here's what I would propose for Bill 103. The government is making a bold move. I urge you to be bolder yet: Move municipal government from a state in which accountability is nothing more than an illusion; recognize that local government is about politics, about choosing between competing claims, associated claims, just claims and unjust claims. To insist that local government should be non-political is like saying politics should be non-political.

We, the governed, need to know who is choosing, who is in charge. In local government we don't know. Let me illustrate. Mr Silipo angrily demanded that Mr Tonks tell the committee the position of Metro council. Mr Tonks was speaking for himself. Mr Silipo apparently doesn't understand that there is no leadership in Metro. Mr Tonks did not have a commitment from his council yet.

To be fair, I must say that absence of leadership is very much a result of the way power and authority are defined in our municipal government. Persisting in the archaic notion that the head of council should be elected at large is not the answer. My definition of real accountability is met when the elected representative is in a position to determine an outcome or result. The mayor has but one vote.

There should be a realignment of the levers of power. I am talking about encouraging parties in local government to achieve a clear understanding of who is in charge.

One cannot simply say, "There shall be parties." Here is how I would see the idea of parties being developed. The mayor should be selected from among council and retain a ward seat. The selection of mayors should be based on a political program, an agenda: Create a collegial atmosphere in policymaking and local political agendas rather than polarizing the mayor and council; put more emphasis on political control over staff.

The mayor should appoint members of council to chair each bundle of services. Those chairs in turn would form the executive committee. This would encourage a more collegial approach and power identification. The chair of each committee would be the spokesperson for the department, not senior staff. This would make it clear to staff who is in charge, not always well established in municipal government these days. This would bring some predictability to municipal policymaking and give people a clearer understanding of who's in charge. As it stands now, the mayor, with one vote, clearly is not.

I urge the government to abandon its ill-advised pursuit of referendum law and really do something for the governed by demystifying municipal government and bringing to it coherence, cohesion and rationality.

In the matter of representation, you might consider increasing the number from 44. This would increase the opportunity for a wider cross-section to be directly involved, particularly if the preferred abandonment of special purpose bodies is pursued. Remember that politicians come cheaper than bureaucrats. I think the government should consider as well having ward boundaries cross the existing municipal boundaries to encourage new political images.

Public participation: Don't force it in the way contemplated by this bill but make information and access more

easily available in a more coherent form of government. Publish meetings and issues to be discussed well in advance, as well as how to participate. In other words, drop the neighbourhood committee idea per se. Let people form their own alliances to engage in public debate. They always have; they always will.

I know the Toronto Star is in favour of election of the mayor. That race would make great copy, but it does nothing for accountability and could result in a mayor who is totally irresponsible. Remember, the mayor's vote in council is not like the Premier's vote in cabinet. There are perhaps a couple of exceptions to this: Mel Lastman and Hazel McCallion.

The provincial government might shrink from the thought of the power that a municipal entity that can get its act together would have. I think the provincial government owes it to the residents of Toronto and the GTA to provide the basis for responsive, responsible and accountable government to face the rising challenges that are before the GTA. The alternative is for the province to be that government.

I've watched participants come to this table and alternately say that you're listening and you're not listening. I would urge the people who have come to this table to listen to what's been put before this committee.

Among those I've heard I have some personal favourites. I thought the presentation by George Cameron Sloan from the Beaches was marvellous, as was David Domet's from Lakeshore-New Toronto, where I grew up. David Nowlan, a professor from the University of Toronto, I thought had some wonderful points. Norm Kelly I thought summed up the future role of a unified city; you notice I haven't said "megacity." I agree with what Norm Kelly said, that we're working within the boundaries that are already there. We're talking about a unified city. Of course Professor Michael Keating, who is my next-door neighbour at Western, who has not appeared before this committee, had a brilliant analysis of all sides of this question in the *Globe and Mail* on February 4.

Thank you for listening. You look attentive for this hour of the evening.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. You finished just on time.

This concludes the hearings for this evening. We stand adjourned until Monday, February 24.

*The committee adjourned at 2108.*





## STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Chair / Président:** Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls PC)

**Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York PC)

Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood L)  
Mr Harry Danford (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
Mr Jim Flaherty (Durham Centre / -Centre PC)  
Mr Michael Gravelle (Port Arthur L)  
Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford PC)  
Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York ND)  
Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls PC)  
Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York PC)  
Mrs Lillian Ross (Hamilton West / -Ouest PC)  
Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview L)  
Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough PC)  
Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Simcoe Centre / -Centre PC)  
Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North / -Nord ND)  
Mr Terence H. Young (Halton Centre / -Centre PC)

### **Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:**

Mr Jack Carroll (Chatham-Kent PC)  
Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex South / -Sud L)  
Mr Douglas B. Ford (Etobicoke-Humber PC)  
Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East / -Est PC)  
Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale PC)  
Hon Al Leach (St George-St David PC)  
Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre / -Centre PC)  
Mr John L. Parker (York East / -Est PC)

### **Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie ND)  
Mr Gilles Pouliot (Lake Nipigon / Lac-Nipigon ND)  
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ISSN 1180-5218

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 36th Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 24 February 1997

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 24 février 1997

Standing committee on  
general government

Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales

City of Toronto Act, 1996

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Monday 24 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Lundi 24 février 1997

*The committee met at 0903 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
**LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO**

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

**WALTER JARSKY**

**The Chair (Mr Bart Maves):** Good morning and welcome to the standing committee on general government's committee hearings on the City of Toronto Act.

Our first deputant today is Mr Walter Jarsky. Good morning, sir. You can come forward. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes this morning to make a presentation.

**Mr Walter Jarsky:** Good morning. My name is Walter Jarsky. I live in Toronto with my wife. I've lived here half my life. My wife and I have raised our three sons in this city. I've lived half my life in Toronto and half my life in New York City and I've had a chance, through contact with my family and contact with friends and family here, to know what real estate taxes people pay in both cities, what income taxes, and what benefits they get.

I'd like to begin by talking to you about my first impressions in coming to this city in 1967 when I came to graduate school. I had gone to university at the City University of New York, which was a good university but it was crowded. We couldn't get seats in the cafeteria and there weren't enough books in the library. When I came to the University of Toronto, I was overwhelmed with the common wealth of the city and of the university. Then when I became aware of the health care system which had been implemented around that time, I once again was struck by the common wealth of the city and the country.

After I finished graduate school, and after spending a couple of years in the States, my wife and I decided to live in Toronto probably for one essential reason: because of the social freedom that we felt here, not necessarily the political freedom or the economic freedom, but the way the people related to one another and the tolerance with differences and ideas and colours and so forth and so on.

As we became settled in the city — we raised our family in Parkdale for 18 years — one of the things that

struck us was the responsiveness of local government. My wife grew up in Belgium, which is a country of about 10 million people, perhaps overgoverned but less responsive, and I grew up in New York City — not in Manhattan but in the Bronx and Queens, where the masses of New Yorkers live, so it doesn't have the glamour of Manhattan. Just as an ordinary person, there wasn't a sense that you could get on the phone and talk to someone and your problem would be responded to.

This was certainly the case in the neighbourhood where we lived in Toronto, even when it came to a point when in fact it was proven true that there were politicians involved in collusion with developers in the bachelorette issue. Even after that went on for years and years, local citizens were able to get the cooperation of representatives of government to take on that kind of problem of local corruption.

The issue that I would like to address in Bill 103 is basically the process of how it's being handled and even implemented, because parts of it are already being implemented. What I want to address is the democratic or the undemocratic elements of it. I really think democracy is in trouble in this country and the way this legislation is being handled is worsening the problems.

There's one idea that I want to address in my presentation. It's just one idea, and that is that if you act as if the ends justify the means, the means have a way of becoming ends in themselves. As this bill is being pushed through, it's eroding democracy, and that's becoming an end in itself. In other words, we're overriding true discussion of real, important issues because the importance of amalgamation overrides the democratic elements.

I want to say that I really appreciate the opportunity to speak before you, but I think we have a lot more to do than this kind of process. I think a white paper or a discussion paper needs to be presented to address what problems are trying to be solved with this bill so we can discuss it in principle. I'm not against amalgamation, but what problem are we trying to solve? This way we can have a fair discussion.

There are some unresolved national issues which I know don't come directly under this committee or this Parliament, like Quebec or native people. As a people, we haven't found ways to address these intractable problems. How we handle every small decision builds democracy, and if we erode democracy in the small decisions, we're incapable of handling the more difficult ones.

**0910**

There's one remark I would like to make about neighbourhood committees. I've been involved with various committees of schools or agencies where they were required or it was better if they had input from the

community, and half the time that process was incredible, because eventually it was discovered, well, "We'll have as much local democracy as is necessary to show that we have local democracy; we'll only have enough to show that we do, but we really don't believe in it."

When we have a discussion paper, we need to address, if we're going to have neighbourhood committees — and I really believe in the value of them, no matter what system we have, and in some sense we have them already with different neighbourhood associations — we need to write down what they're going to look like and what kind of power they're going to have. I think in England there was some attempt at these local committees 10 years ago, and when the people realized they didn't have any power, they stopped wanting to participate.

That's all I want to say. I really think the process needs to be slowed down, and I think the discussion needs to be broadened and things need to be written down. I really object to parts of this bill being implemented on December 17, 1996. I think it's undemocratic, particularly the part that says the decisions of the board of trustees are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court.

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** Thank you, Mr Jarsky. As you just ended in saying, one of the things we've forgotten in all the deputations is that the first thing the government did when it introduced this bill on December 17 was it essentially put 2.3 million people in Metro under trusteeship, and not subject to the bill being passed. As it says in the explanatory notes, "From December 17, 1996 (the date of the bill's introduction) and during the transitional year of 1997, a board of trustees will oversee the financial affairs of the seven existing municipal governments." So retroactively, these trustees were given powers, and as you said, these powers are not even subject to the courts; they're above the law. Have you ever heard of case like this happening in the States?

**Mr Jarsky:** I've been thinking about this. I was raised in Flushing, Queen's, where the nanny in that comedy sitcom is from. I don't know if you're familiar with that show, with that funny laugh and funny accent. I was looking up Flushing on the Internet, and it was granted a charter in 1645 by the Dutch governors. The local cities there have their own charter, so they have their autonomy. Here, the way the law is set up, I understand the local municipalities derive their power through the province. This may be part of our history, but in terms of the general history of democracy, it goes against the history of democracy.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Jarsky, for coming forward to make your presentation today. We appreciate it.

#### SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO

**The Chair:** Would Peter Clutterbuck please come forward. Good morning, sir. Welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes this morning for a presentation. If at the end of your presentation there is some time remaining, I will ask probably the government caucus to ask questions, unless the NDP caucus comes in quickly.

**Mr Peter Clutterbuck:** Thank you, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. I've given you a package,

most of which is appendices which we think are relevant to the issue under discussion in a number of ways. I will be referring to them as I go through what is also a prepared presentation that you have in front of you.

The Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto is pleased to have this chance to address itself to the standing committee on Bill 103. We're an independent, community-based, voluntary organization dedicated to social research, policy analysis and public education on issues that affect the social wellbeing of the residents of Metro Toronto. We have kind of a historic commitment to the whole regional local governance issue. We're about to have our 40th birthday as a Metropolitan body, having emerged from a city of Toronto body in 1957, which was just four years after the creation of the municipality of Metro Toronto.

We've witnessed the benefits of two-tier municipal governance in this region, and although extending our city mandate to the Metropolitan area in 1957, the SPC at that time made sure it also created local area governing councils so that citizens could identify local social concerns requiring study and action. I've included a historical document at appendix B that shows some of the thinking behind maintaining local governance, local input. What was quite interesting and distinctive about this development is that even though we became a Metropolitan body out of a city-wide body, these local governing councils ended up becoming autonomous, independent bodies at the area municipal level in every city except the city of Toronto over the next 10 or 15 years, indicating some of the sense of ownership and commitment people have at the local level to having influence on human service planning. We have worked effectively and productively with these local planning organizations on Metro-wide issues over the last 40 years.

In 1979, the Metro SPC produced a landmark report called Metro Suburbs in Transition, which documented the need for a more equitable social support system across Metro Toronto, and over the years Metro Toronto council has taken leadership and action in strengthening and improving the social infrastructure in this community, although in recent years there has been a good deal of erosion from budget cuts, not all strictly the municipality's doing because of downloading from higher levels.

The SPC's own history therefore reflects the very core of the current debate on governance; that is, how to balance the need for effective regional planning and development which achieves greater equity in the use of resources across the region with the need for affirming local diversity and assuring community access to the democratic and planning process.

The SPC was engaged in the discussion of appropriate governance models for the GTA last year, responding to the Golden report — I've included a Social Infopac with our analysis of the Golden report as appendix C — and we joined with 13 major Metro-wide human service agencies in presenting to the GTA panel of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, which is appendix D.

In January 1997, the SPC board stated its policy for evaluating proposed alternative governance models as follows:

"The Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto supports municipal governance structures and processes that: provide effective service planning and development at a regional level; assign local and municipal functions and responsibilities to the appropriate local and regional levels with a clear rationale for how the local and regional levels work together; are based on direct election of political representatives at all levels in order to maximize democratic accountability; and provide the municipal mechanisms and means for active citizen participation in local planning and decision-making."

There are at least three governance options that could be reviewed using this framework: (1) modifying the current two-tier Metro system; (2) upgrading the two-tier system with an effective regional governing body at the greater Toronto area level and maintaining four to six area municipalities in Metro Toronto; and (3) establishing a two-tier system with a GTA regional body and a unified Toronto.

Unfortunately, in our view, Bill 103 offers an incomplete model since its primary objective is to amalgamate the six Metro area municipalities into one big city. The bill is not clear about the new unified city's relationship to the GTA services board, which itself is still in the process of being defined. The assurance of maintaining local input via neighbourhood committees is vague and indeterminate. I think there are only two references actually to it in the bill. Finally, limiting the discussion to amalgamation within Metro does not permit full consideration of the whole governance issue for the GTA region as suggested by the above three options. On this matter, the SPC board approved the following resolution on January 29, 1997:

"The Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto believes that it is essential that the Ontario government provide a fair opportunity for a full and open public policy debate on any major restructuring of municipal governance, municipal-provincial finances, and social service delivery before implementing such changes in policy or legislation."

In other words, we do support the recommendation that's been here before around a white paper that presents options such as we've identified and perhaps some others and encourages real serious consideration about the benefits in relationships among all levels of government rather than just talk about amalgamating the current six.

There is an important link to downloading that really affects this whole debate. The Ontario government's own actions have also made it impossible to focus strictly on the governance issues of Bill 103. The SPC believes that a true and honest debate about governance cannot be held while the Ontario government remains committed to downloading major health, housing, welfare and social service costs on to the municipalities. In that regard, our board approved the following position on January 29:

"The Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto does not support the main thrust and direction of the Ontario government's announcements during the week of January 13, 1997 with respect to the devolution of major health, housing, welfare, and social services responsibilities on to municipalities and the property tax base."

## 0920

"The Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto sees devolution of these responsibilities as counter to the public interest in the following ways:

"It reduces the role and responsibility of higher orders of government (federal and provincial) to ensure equity and decent service standards in essential income, health, housing and social service supports for all Ontarians;

"It places essential income maintenance, health and social service supports on the regressive local property tax base rather than the progressive income tax base;

"It will promote highly variable standards of service across the province, increase inequities, and lead to levelling service provisions and standards to the lowest common denominator;

"It will give impetus to greater commercialization in human services, which will create a highly fragmented service system with less regulation of service standards;

"It will lower labour standards in human services, which will, in turn, lead to poorer-quality services less well monitored and inadequately regulated by the public eye;

"It will place an unfair caregiving burden on women for dependent family members; and

"It will severely weaken the role of the voluntary sector and its traditional partnership with government, which has produced highly efficient, high-quality services along with the additional benefit of supporting strong volunteer participation in active community life."

Current Ontario government discussion with municipalities on the setting of welfare rates indicates the link between municipal governance and the downloading actions. Municipalities forced to take on greater financial responsibilities naturally want more control over the costs they will incur. The inevitable pressure from the property taxpayers on elected municipal representatives and eventually on the provincial government will be to lower welfare benefits to the poorest parts of the population. We are not reassured by the community and social services minister's expressed intent to hold fast on the current rate as a minimum, which is already 20% less than it was a year and a half ago, especially as the next provincial election approaches.

The combination of Bill 103 and downloading also threatens the stability and quality of the social service infrastructure in Metro and in other communities across Ontario. Already, transfer payment reductions to municipalities in the last few years have caused cuts and cutbacks in the quantity and quality of municipally delivered social services. Further municipal grant cuts and direct provincial funding cuts to non-profit community services in the voluntary sector have also caused much hardship.

The SPC joined with Metro community services and the city of Toronto to do a survey on the impact of funding cuts in more than 400 community agencies across Metro Toronto. Entering 1996, 162 agency programs to the most vulnerable community members — children and youth, women, seniors, disabled people and immigrants — had already been terminated and another 437 were at risk of termination in 1996-97.

The downloading of social services will put tremendous pressure on municipalities to reduce their own direct social service commitments and to do their own offloading of social service responsibilities. Commercial operators will happily promise low-cost service and will accept contracts for everything from welfare administration to senior care to child care. The stronger entry of commercial operators into the field will weaken the voluntary service sector, even though our research shows that not-for-profit human services offer higher quality and cost-effective services compared to commercial operators for all but the very high end of the service market.

In the social services, the Ontario government is in grave danger of creating a highly fragmented and stratified three-tier human service system: high-end market services based on the well-off consumer's ability to pay the prices; lower-quality, outsourced commercial services and minimal public services for the broad middle part of the population, supported by a diminished tax base; and low-end community services for the impoverished and destitute delivered by voluntary agencies and churches and supported primarily by private charity.

Devolution or downloading responsibilities on to municipalities inevitably promotes minimalist government and favours a relatively unfettered private market, not just in human services but eventually in other public utilities as well, such as water and hydro.

Devolution policies shift responsibility from the collective public realm, in which the whole society shares costs and benefits in order to be as broadly inclusive as possible, to the private domain of individuals, families and communities, in which self-reliance is the paramount consideration for success and social support for the poor is left to the voluntary spirit and goodwill of the community. As well, this shift threatens to undermine social cohesion and to create a more divided society.

Bill 103 then is not really an honest proposal for restructuring governance in Metro Toronto. Like Bill 104 in education, Bill 103 is being sold to the public on the basis of the need for "less government," for "fewer politicians," and for "reduced bureaucracy and administration." The very role of government is being discredited, while market solutions are promoted as our salvation.

The social planning council suggests that before we can properly address ourselves to how many governments we need, what their relationships should be and how they should be financed, we need to determine exactly what we expect of our government and democratic institutions and not to assume that government has no constructive, meaningful role to play in shaping the quality of community life.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. There are four minutes for questions, starting with Mrs Munro.

**Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York):** Thank you very much. I appreciate your concerns in terms of the devolution of powers, but I'd like to go back to the specific issues you raised regarding Bill 103. On page 3 you outline three possible governance options that could be reviewed. I wonder if you'd care to comment on which of those three you see as the most promising.

**Mr Clutterbuck:** Actually, we as the social planning council are quite open to exploring in the community any

of the three. We did not necessarily see that the existing two-tier system was broken to begin with, though we felt there might have been more rationalization of services between the two-tier systems. Our info pack in your package indicates that if there were an effective greater Toronto area body that was directly elected, that had powers and a mandate to ensure equity across the greater region, you could have a greater Toronto council and maintain the existing local municipal councils for closer, more direct government of the people, closer to the people, essentially. We identify that as a possibility in our social info pack.

**Mrs Munro:** In other words, you would have people who directly represent the Toronto interests per se, and then a GTA-wide group as well?

**Mr Clutterbuck:** Not just a GTA services board but an actual governing body at the GTA level — that's a possibility — which does have a mandate and taxing powers and responsibility for, for example, regional social planning and assurance of equity in social services as well as the physical infrastructure. Too often the social services side of things gets left out when restructuring exercises occur. We felt even the GTA report by Anne Golden was not adequate in this regard, as indicated in our info pack.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** Thank you, Mr Clutterbuck, for coming before us this morning. I would like to follow up on what Mrs Munro was just asking you. As I look at your third choice, your submission, and I don't want to put words in your mouth, is that when the greater Toronto service board is brought forward with legislation later this spring, as long as it provides an effective means to balance off the needs and the income redistribution within the GTA, you're comfortable with the idea of a unified Toronto?

**Mr Clutterbuck:** We think that what needs to happen is that these three options, or maybe others, need to be presented to the community to discuss. Our role as a social planning council is to help to facilitate the community to review these three options. I think what's happened with Bill 103, as a result of the way it has been implemented, is that the government has stimulated greater thinking and commitment of people to their local area municipalities. The question is, would the same thing have emerged if these three options had been put in a white paper and offered seriously to the community for people to constructively discuss what they chose? I think there's been great demonstration before this committee over the last few weeks that people have a good idea of what they want at the local level, and for that reason there appears to be opposition here in Toronto, not just the city of Toronto but places like North York, to the idea of a unified Toronto.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Mr Clutterbuck. I appreciate your group keeping an open mind in terms of the options we should be looking at.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Clutterbuck, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### EAST YORK ACTION COMMITTEE

**The Chair:** Would Steve Talsky please come forward? Good morning, Mr Talsky. Welcome to the committee.

You have 15 minutes for a presentation. If there's time left at the end of your presentation, I'll ask Mr Marchese of the NDP caucus to ask questions.

**Mr Steven Talsky:** My name is Steven Talsky. This is Elizabeth Rowley, also from East York. We are actually pinch-hitting. The person who was originally going to do the presentation was Margaret Watson, who would be on your list; unfortunately, she caught the flu from her child and both of them are at home. If you don't mind, we're going to try to pinch-hit this together.

**Ms Elizabeth Rowley:** Good morning. We're here on behalf of the East York Action Committee and we'd like to thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning.

The East York Action Committee is a coalition of parents and teachers, public and private sector tenants and homeowners, students and seniors, the employed and the unemployed. We are a coalition of individuals, labour unions and community organizations. The committee first came together to plan East York's participation in the Metro Days of Action last October and we've been meeting regularly since then.

Recently, we held two public forums in East York. The first, on February 5, was about both Bills 103 and 104; the second, on February 18, was called "A Community Forum on Fighting the Mega-board: To Save Quality Education." The events attracted well over 100 people each, and those people had a message they wanted us to pass on to this committee and to the government of Ontario: democracy.

0930

They wanted us to tell you that Bill 103 is breathtaking in its contempt for democracy. It places elected municipal governments under trusteeships indefinitely. It gives an appointed board of trustees the power to overturn almost any decision local councils make. Every move this board makes is made in secret, and though the board answers to the provincial cabinet, it's not accountable to the public. It is above the law. Elections are important in democratic societies, but for government to be accountable its decisions must be subject to the rule of law and open to challenge in court. Yet Bill 103 puts unelected appointees — the board of trustees — above the law.

We know that some people who have spoken before this committee have made comparisons to other undemocratic regimes, either metaphorically or directly. Some ministers and the press claim that this is name-calling at best or fearmongering at worst. But perhaps, like us, the name-callers are simply and truly appalled by Bill 103's blatant attack on treasured democratic rights.

Bill 103 attacks democracy in other ways. If passed, it would force amalgamation on the municipalities in Metro Toronto where people may not, and we believe do not, wish to have their local governments eliminated.

Perhaps it seems trite to provincial politicians, but it is nonetheless true that municipal governments and local school boards are the democratic institutions that are closest to the community. They are essential to our quality of life and people don't want to lose them — we don't want to lose them. In our view, less government in practice simply means less democracy. We want to preserve the level of representation we currently have and we believe we have the right to democratic public control of our local institutions.

Government spokespeople and the media have taken to ridiculing local governments lately by pointing to this or that decision which may be particularly hard to defend, and from Scarborough to Etobicoke, it is easy to find some wrong or simply controversial decision or some example of undemocratic decision-making. Of course, it helps that municipal governments, with rare exceptions, meet in public. In East York we can watch council meetings on Monday nights on the cable station. When our local elected representatives, either individually or collectively, do something we disagree with, we know. In contrast, we never see the provincial cabinet meetings on the public affairs channel and not even the agenda for cabinet meetings are public information.

Since for us it's not a question of agreeing with every decision local governments make, the answer isn't to shut these governments down. To improve the quality of life in our community, we need to make governments increasingly open and democratic. We believe, and all the evidence demonstrates to us, that the megacity is a move in the opposite direction. Some other members of our committee have arrived, Ian Cameron and Frances Nordvie.

Perhaps, and finally, this is the bottom line: The East York Action Committee believes that the people who live and work and go to school in East York must have the democratic right to decide on the form their local governments and school boards will take.

(1) We believe that any restructuring must be voluntary, not forced, with the consent of the people in the communities affected and that municipalities and school boards must be recognized and given an independent existence in the Canadian Constitution.

(2) We call on the government to withdraw the trusteeships imposed on municipalities and school boards and withdraw both Bills 103 and 104, that have removed the power to govern from our elected representatives.

(3) We call on the government to repeal Bill 26 and restore the obligation of cities to hold a binding referendum on any proposal for amalgamation. We also call on this government to respect the decisions that will be reflected in the referenda to come on March 3.

**Mr Talsky:** In the past few days, Tory cabinet ministers, MPPs and Premier Mike Harris himself have stated that Bill 103 should be considered a distinct and separate issue from the massive downloading of costs and services to municipalities that the government has also planned. We are not fooled. In one week in January, cabinet ministers made a series of announcements that would change the financing and delivery of a massive number of services, from the so-called hard services like transportation and sewage to the soft human services like education, welfare and child care.

Some of these proposals, most spectacularly putting social services on the municipal tax bill, are exactly the opposite of what all informed observers have ever had to say on the subject. When bills come in, municipalities will be short hundreds of millions of dollars, as recognized by the fact that the provincial government has suggested there will be a special contingency fund for four years.

The government says the megacity will make Metropolitan Toronto better off. The government also says the downloading is revenue-neutral. But how could it be possible to hand the new megacity all these new costs without residential property taxes rising, by an estimated \$800 on average in East York on the normal home?

The only possible way to use the new structures of governance to downsize, privatize and harmonize is to cut services, to increase existing user fees and charge new ones, and to take public sector jobs and transform them into low-paid private sector jobs.

The new city of Toronto created by Bill 103 would be a weaker municipal government in a number of ways. No, we are not fooled. The East York Action Committee understands that you need the megacity in order to download services and costs and, for the broader agenda, to downsize government and reduce services.

An integral part of this package is privatization. With the huge shift of costs to municipal governments, there would undoubtedly be increased pressure on the megacity to privatize or contract out services. There is no mystery behind the profits that the private sector can make when it takes over public services. From homes for the aged to garbage delivery, standards are lowered, corners are cut, user fees are instituted, accessibility is lost and accountability to the public goes out the window. It is also no secret that well-paying, unionized public sector jobs are soon transformed into less secure, lower-paid and sporadically unionized private sector jobs. We fear that once the public services are privatized the provisions in NAFTA will make it very hard to reverse the decision.

In the East York Action Committee, we understand the importance of quality public services and good jobs to the health of our community. Our fight for the quality of life in East York concerns all of us.

**Taxation:** We should remind ourselves that there is a need for reform in the greater Toronto area that started all this, to stop the flight of business from Metropolitan Toronto to outlying areas and to coordinate regional service. The Bill 103 downloading package will only worsen the situation for Metropolitan Toronto. In addition, taxation changes like actual value assessment and the repeal of the business occupancy tax are being used to transfer the costs of services to those who can least afford them and to hand a gift, in actual billions of dollars, to the wealthy.

The East York Action Committee supports cooperative sharing of services by local governments. We also demand a fair and equitable taxation system based on the ability to pay, a uniform commercial and industrial tax rate across the GTA and statutory transfer payments from the province to municipalities at levels adequate to fund services.

On February 5, 1997, approximately 150 East Yorkers attended a meeting at Valley Park Middle School and passed the following motion: "That this meeting calls on the government of Ontario to immediately withdraw Bills 103 and 104." We also have a petition that was signed by East York area residents at both of our recent meetings, again calling on this government to withdraw the legislation.

The East York Action Committee is not here to say slow down so you can get it right or to suggest ways to change the funding of social services so that downloading will become somehow palatable. We are saying this attack on our democratic rights and our quality of life must stop. Thank you for your time today.

**The Chair:** Mr Marchese, you have a little more than three minutes.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** I thank all of you for taking the time to come today to make your presentation.

I want to start by saying that the Urban Development Institute came in front of this committee, the hotel industry and many other business people who seem to have found that this amalgamation is good for them. Is there something wrong that some of you ratepayers just may have missed the whole point of amalgamation, that maybe there's something there that's good for you too and you just missed it?

0940

**Ms Rowley:** I think the one thing we didn't miss was the elimination of the business occupancy tax, which is obviously something that business would want, but that means they will transfer the cost of the tax. If we are to maintain current tax levels, that will be transferred on to residential property taxes, and we are seeing that with the imposition of AVA, which is a dressed-up version of market value assessment, as I'm sure the committee knows.

The other proposals for downloading: You can't have it both ways and there are in fact only two taxpayers, business and residential taxpayers. We see no reason why residential taxpayers should be asked to pay even more, particularly when corporations across Metro Toronto are appealing their taxes and it's coming out of schools. It's unfair taxation, in our view.

**Mr Marchese:** That is one of the fears with the occupancy tax, because once you remove a tax, you've got to replace it somehow with something else. So that is a problem.

The point I wanted to make is that business believes this is good for them, and I agree. This is good for business, for the developers. It's nice for them to have one place to stop for planning purposes, but many have come here, as you've done, arguing that it's not good for people in terms of issues of democracy, accessibility and sensitivity to people's local needs. That's what I've heard most of the deputants say when they came here.

**Mr Talsky:** The best comment I ever heard on this was when I attended a meeting at Bennington Heights in Mr Parker's riding, the heart of what we call the Leaside small-c conservative area. I heard the former mayor of East York, Alan Redway, speak. He, as some people would know, was a councillor in East York, mayor of East York, and a member of the federal cabinet during Brian Mulroney's time as Prime Minister of Canada.

He spoke very eloquently on the fact that having experienced it from all levels, from being an East York councillor all the way up to being a federal cabinet minister in a Conservative government, he believed that what we were going to do in creating this one Toronto, this megacity, would not be more cost-efficient. Having

experienced it from the lowest level to the highest level, he spoke eloquently, and I hope he comes before this committee and speaks eloquently, about how good it is to have local cities, whether they be 100,000, 200,000, 500,000. I believe the optimum was 500,000 to be efficient in terms of costs.

The fact is, Mr Redway's whole argument was that the megacity will be too big and will become inefficient. So while business will have one-stop shopping, the ordinary ratepayers, whether it be my mother who lives in North York right now and enjoys having her sidewalk plowed with the little machine and the two-times-a-week garbage — I think everybody will pay the price in terms of the inefficiencies of the megacity.

**Mr Marchese:** We think so, and most of the researchers who have done research on amalgamation have shown that it's more costly. Even Mr Harris in 1994, in a town called Fergus, said that bigger is not necessarily better and that in fact it would be more costly to have a bigger government. That's been my experience in terms of accessibility. The bigger you get, the more difficult it is to access those people. Is that not your experience?

**Ms Rowley:** Absolutely. Actually we're presenting a paper to you, and I think we're doing it right now, but if not, we'll submit it separately. It's an article in National Geographic from 1987 which shows the results of amalgamation in the city of Indianapolis, and it's devastating. One of the pieces the article shows is people in a community organizing bake sales and garage sales in order to pay for new sidewalks in their community. This isn't the way we want to go and there's been no public discussion about this kind of direction.

**The Chair:** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. We've exhausted your allotted time. Do you have a quick comment, sir?

**Mr Ian Cameron:** I'd just very quickly like to address this question of downloading of services on to the municipalities. I believe it's the responsibility of the province, employment, and where are people going to go from places outside of Toronto? If they're out of work, they're going to go to Toronto, so those problems of housing and welfare etc are not Toronto's alone. They are the responsibility of the province. Downloading them on to the municipalities, I think, is a great mistake. We are taking the people looking for jobs from all over the province in Toronto because there's a job market. I think that's a fundamental error, downloading on to municipalities these services.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, for coming forward and making a presentation today.

#### ELIZABETH BROWN

**The Chair:** Would Elizabeth Brown please come forward. Good morning, Ms Brown. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Elizabeth Brown:** Good morning. I am the councillor for ward 11 in the city of Etobicoke. I'm here today representing my own views primarily, with a little bit of input from family, friends and a couple of colleagues on council.

Ward 11 is the largest geographic ward in the city of Etobicoke. Located in the northwest corner of Metro, it is very multicultural, very much inhabited by members of every socioeconomic group. However, surprisingly enough, it has almost 50% of Etobicoke's business, commercial and industrial base. That's 4,000 businesses in one ward.

Bill 103 proposes two new wards per federal riding. I say if this is the Common Sense Revolution, then let's be truly revolutionary. Divide up some of the work among the wards, along with the voters. Give every member of council some responsibility for truly representing business rather than letting them say they are pro-business and never having to prove it. Do not use federal boundaries as excuses to shortchange business.

My second topic is acceptance. I would like to say that after having spent the last five years participating in various committees and task forces concerned with governance review, I can't figure out why you would choose to have one big city. However, I come from a big family and one learns in a big family that one doesn't always get one's own way. I acknowledge that we have to start somewhere and I'm willing to work with the program. The status quo no longer works. I think your promise of quick and flexible response to problems is truly innovative for government and I hope it's true.

Evaluation: I suggest a legislated review period be included in the City of Toronto Act, 1996. Any successful business or organization continuously reviews and fine-tunes the way it conducts itself. Metropolitan Toronto hasn't been fine-tuned since 1977 and it is long overdue. Mr Robarts suggested in his report a review in no less than five years and no more than 10. The previous two governments refused to review, and in this way failed to acknowledge the importance of Toronto to Ontario's and Canada's economy.

Implementation: I would like to inquire as to the reason for your implementation method. I would have expected from a socialist government a design of governance framework that was then implemented by forcing people to comply for their own good. The usual Conservative way would be to design a better governance framework and it would be so good that everyone would voluntarily sign up, except of course for the noisy 20% of people who resist any change. I acknowledge that the province's historical experience with our seven governments is that we often choose not to voluntarily comply.

Non-unionized staff: Of great concern to my colleagues and the staff of the city of Etobicoke is the status of our non-unionized employees. The city of Etobicoke inside workers and the Etobicoke Public Library board employees have not been unionized. We ask you for legislation to protect the seniority of non-union employees. I believe this applies to East York as well. I understand that you included this in the Kingston-Frontenac amalgamation legislation.

Representation: Forty-four councillors and one mayor seems fair or it seems arbitrary — any number would. The status quo would be continuing unfair lack of proportional representation, which I believe is unconstitutional. For example, the mayor of East York represents approximately 100,000 people. The mayor of Etobicoke repre-

sents 300,000 people and the mayor of Toronto represents 700,000 people. They each have one vote at Metro. Similar lack of proportional representation has been successfully challenged in the American courts.

**Local delivery:** My constituents have said they don't want to go to downtown Toronto for building permits, variances or to sign up for swimming lessons. They want local delivery of service from satellite offices. By also delivering the Metro services locally, such as business licences, service could actually be enhanced.

#### 0950

**Community identity:** Because Metro Toronto has built out over the years into a contiguous urban area, most people aren't aware of municipal boundaries, and most of them don't care. Some people, though, are very aware of their community identity. We no longer have the municipalities of Weston or Thistletown, but these communities continue to exist. This will not change under Bill 103 because communities are held together by interested people, not by legislation.

I will comment now on some of the other recently introduced legislation as it affects the city to be created by Bill 103.

First, there's Bill 104. It's high time for educational reform. Some school trustees repeatedly tell us, as city councillors, that they don't answer to the taxpayers in general or to society but only to parents. So as soon as my youngest child graduates or otherwise leaves school, the trustee I vote for, the trustee who gets a vote on how my tax dollars are spent — and this is the largest portion of my realty tax bill — is no longer required to answer to me?

I'm very pleased with the changes proposed in Bill 104. I believe that society educates its young to have them become productive members of society. We educate them for the good of all, not just to meet parental wishes. The sooner there is provincial standardization, the sooner attention will focus on education rather than on bureaucratic finagling such as producing a newly designed report card every six months.

**Assessment reform:** Assessment reform is long past due and is very welcome in my corner of Etobicoke. I have personally helped over 1,000 different residents appeal their assessment under today's antiquated, obsolete and unfair system. In 1972, this province legislated province-wide market value assessment. It was ignored by several of the largest municipalities in this province. We welcome assessment reform and hope you start with the most hopelessly out-of-date properties first. It is guaranteed that if we don't get assessment reform, our taxes will go up, because they traditionally have.

**Welfare reform:** I have reservations about this proposal. Any large city attracts not just immigrants and refugees, but the unemployed and others seeking opportunity. Many find success, but how long should we be responsible for those who don't find success? If you give us the responsibilities for providing a social safety net, allow us to charge back North Bay or Newfoundland, Sudbury or Saskatchewan, or you may witness a Klein-like response where the cheapest solution is to buy people a bus ticket back whence they came.

**Transit:** Bill 103 and the transit reform suggested still fail to address the artificial barriers to service presented by the regional municipal boundaries. Please remove the monopolistic privileges of municipal public transit systems. Allow private providers to provide service for a fee: a shopping centre shuttle in a community or a racetrack shuttle, for example. Currently, there is no threat of competition and there will never be efficiencies without that threat.

**Libraries:** I am the chair of the Etobicoke Public Library Board and I've been a trustee for nine years. I welcome the opportunities the new legislation presents and congratulate the minister. A local service with local options and opportunities makes far more sense than one-size-smothers-all regulated service.

In closing, I like the overall package. Please legislate a review to prevent governance chaos in the future. I think most people aren't going to notice much change at all until they have a problem. By that time Bill 103 should have made how we are governed simpler and easier to understand, with easy access for the average person.

**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** Thank you, Ms Brown, for coming to make a submission to our committee today.

The introduction of Bill 103 has been made with the pretext that this will lower taxes, will offer better services and will give more and better representation. As a local councillor or trustee before, do you think this is going to be the case, that we're going to get some tax reductions?

**Ms Brown:** I can't guarantee that there will be tax reductions under any legislation, but what I can guarantee is that if we maintain the present system, the taxes will go up, because they have for the past 20 years.

**Mr Sergio:** Not any legislation, but Bill 103 as it is presented: What do you think?

**Ms Brown:** I think it's our best hope for a reduction in taxes.

**Mr Sergio:** But you don't see anything in this particular bill as it is presented; just a hope, maybe?

**Ms Brown:** I see some hope, yes.

**Mr Sergio:** I see.

**Ms Brown:** It can't be any worse than it is right now.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Brown, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

#### SKIP WILLIS

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Would Skip Willis please come forward. Good morning, Mr Willis. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Skip Willis:** I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to appear this morning before this committee and to give my perspective on the range of issues involved in the proposed amalgamation.

My name is Skip Willis and I'm a self-employed business consultant resident in Etobicoke. I was born and grew up in Winnipeg, so I may not have the same emotional tie to my neighbourhood, but I've spent the last 17 years in Metropolitan Toronto so I am very familiar with the subject.

Having grown up in Winnipeg, I had the opportunity of living through this amalgamation process once before. When I was born, there were 13 municipalities that made up Metropolitan Winnipeg, each with its own government and bureaucracy, each with its own services and tax base.

In the 1950s, there was a recognition that reform was required, and in 1959 there was a metropolitan government created in Winnipeg to try and deal with city-wide issues.

In this case, the process was further complicated by the rampant ego of the then mayor of Winnipeg, Stephen Juba, who refused to participate. So Winnipeg ended up with a bizarre doughnut configuration, with the metropolitan government dealing with the concerns of 12 municipalities and the city core continuing to plot an independent course.

This cumbersome structure stumbled along for some 12 years before we were treated to the unicity debate leading to the amalgamation into a single city. The debate at the time was very reminiscent of what I've heard over the past few months in Toronto. There was great concern that the unique nature of the various neighbourhoods would be totally lost. The municipality that I lived in, Tuxedo, had a population of 12,000 people. We knew the mayor and the chief of police by name. Surely all of this would be lost as we were swallowed up in a megalopolis 50 times our size.

In retrospect, it was amazing how little changed. We were less likely to encounter the mayor on the street, but the garbage continued to be picked up, the streets were plowed, the police were present, and life went on.

I would, however, add one word of caution in this whole process. Although we learned in Winnipeg that the quality of our community has everything to do with the people who live there and their attitudes and behaviours and very little to do with whether city hall was five blocks away or five miles away, I do not recall seeing the benefits of unicity being manifested in my tax bill.

I want to make my position on this point very clear. I have looked at the KPMG report and I am satisfied that the savings that they have enumerated are possible. My point is that although amalgamation can save money, that doesn't necessarily mean that it will save money.

Politicians are prudent spenders of taxpayers' money when they feel they have to be. In the absence of that pressure, it is always politically more palatable to spend more. I believe that the order of magnitude of savings indicated are possible, but to achieve them will require dedicated political and administrative leadership and constant vigilance on the part of the taxpayer.

Amalgamation proceeded in Winnipeg because it recognized a simple reality: Winnipeg is one city. As I made my way down to Queen's Park this morning from my home office on the western edge of Etobicoke, I was struck by the similarity. Metropolitan Toronto is one city. I did not leave the distinct and separate entity of Etobicoke to enter the distinct and separate entity of Toronto. There is no border and no visa was required. This city has one downtown and one transit system. It is a seamless and integrated whole and it is long past time that it was governed that way.

I am not persuaded by the argument that a million people is the logical upper limit of how large a city can be and still be well governed. In my view, the unit size should be dictated by what makes sense. In Toronto, not only does one city make sense, it also reflects reality.

Information-age technology allows government to be as individual and local and specific as it chooses to be. The issue is not whether it can be done, but whether or not it will be done.

The most controversial aspect of the changes proposed by the government is the downloading of welfare costs to the municipalities. There are two critical aspects of this change. The first is the consolidation of the delivery of services at the municipal level. The second is the sharing of the costs equally between the province and the municipality.

#### 1000

The delivery of welfare services by a single agency at the local level is long overdue. Currently, there are a myriad of welfare programs designed by four different levels of governments and delivered by a patchwork quilt of agencies across the province. For recipients, this can mean up to a half-dozen interviews, explanations and approvals to qualify for different programs. This system is inefficient, archaic, and the changes are long overdue.

The needs of welfare recipients are individual. These cases need to be dealt with by a single case worker comprehensively at the local level so that the support can be appropriate to the needs and the realities of the local situation.

The fiscal pressure faced by governments at all levels is not about to abate. From a private sector perspective, it is very frustrating during the budget debate at all levels of government to see the discussion focusing on cutting services. We in the private sector have faced the same pressure throughout this decade. Our clients and customers want more and are prepared to pay less. We can respond to these pressures or we can go out of business. Cutting services is not an option. It is amazing how productive and creative we can be when we have to be.

The service delivery structure proposed for welfare allows for the flexibility and creativity necessary for service delivery into the next century. If we are to maintain adequately funded programs into the future, we must reform program delivery. This is a necessary first step. I take the strongest possible exception to the vested interests who believe that preserving their jobs and defending the status quo is more important than ensuring benefits are adequately funded in the future. Make no mistake, these are the options.

The downloading of costs to the municipalities is, in my view, largely mathematics. I have reviewed the list of proposed changes and funding responsibility prepared by the government, and they appear to be revenue-neutral. If the numbers based on historical experience and current budgets are inaccurate, then adjust them. Examine the rationale for the reserve fund carefully. Run the models. If adjustments are required, make them.

As this process goes forward, I have two requests. First, please resist the temptation to scaremonger. This debate is too important to inflame it with the suggestion that Toronto, post-amalgamation, could become another

Detroit, with a derelict, dangerous downtown and citizens fleeing to the suburbs. It is not true and it is not useful.

Second, please remember that regardless of your ability to dream up new forms of taxation, there is only one taxpayer. Whether I pay my share of welfare through my property tax or income tax or some consumption tax is a matter of virtually no interest to me. A reasonable system of social welfare that helps the less fortunate is an important part of a civilized society. Whatever taxation route you chose, they all end up at my pocket.

My priority is to see an efficient system that eliminates duplication and delivers benefits equitably at the lowest administrative cost. In the future, I expect to deal with government like I deal with my bank: on line, from home, any time of the day or night. The question of what is federal or provincial or municipal is far more important to you than it to us. We want better service delivered more conveniently at a lower price. This bill is a useful small first step in that direction.

Thank you for the opportunity of speaking to you this morning.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Willis. We'll ask Mr Marchese. We have about a minute.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Willis, I had about four questions of you, but I'll start with the last one. You say that however you pay taxes is irrelevant to you, whether it's through property taxes or income taxes. I have to tell you it's very relevant to most human beings; it is particularly relevant to me.

The property tax is an unfair way to pay for services, most of us argue. Income tax is much more progressive; it's based on income. If I invest all my life savings in a house and you keep on taxing me through the property tax base, I get hurt by it, whereas if it's based on income, it's a lot more fair to pay for services that shouldn't be dumped on to the property taxpayer. That's my view. Is that not your view too?

**Mr Willis:** The point I was making is that there is a portion of my total income or total ability to pay that goes to taxes: some to property tax, some to income tax, some to value added taxes and the whole mix of them. My concern is that we focus on the efficiency of service delivery to lower the costs without compromising the service provided, rather than focusing on which route you take to get into my pocket.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Willis, for appearing here before us today.

#### GEORGE STEPHENSON

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on George Stephenson. Good morning, Mr Stephenson, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr George Stephenson:** Ladies and gentlemen, my name is George Stephenson and I've been a resident of Toronto for close to 50 years. I am a chartered accountant, an FCA, and spent 35 years in business in the financial heartland of downtown Toronto, many of them in executive ranks. I have served on the boards of many charitable and arts organizations, both national and local.

I have also assisted with the political process, from raising money for candidates from all three parties

through to acting as an adviser. One of my favourite memories is raising money for the first mayoralty campaign of David Crombie, then considered a very dark horse.

I have lived in the Oriole Parkway, Lawrence Park and Moore Park areas of Toronto. I now live not very far from here, just west of the university. Since my retirement from business, I have been an active member of the board of my local residents' association. I believe my knowledge of this city is thorough.

I want to thank you for the privilege of making this presentation and I want to emphasize that I do not come here to do battle; instead, I come to reason.

It is to the process, or lack of process, concerning Bill 103 and related proposed legislation that I wish to speak. You have heard from many others concerning the serious inadequacies, indeed mistakes, in the proposed legislation. Attempts by the government to correct them may be well intentioned, but it is my strongest belief that these inadequacies or mistakes have been overtaken by a process so deeply flawed as to leave only one option open: A new process is needed to give both the government and the citizens it represents a fresh start.

There is no need for the extreme rush now under way. Yes, there will always be some opposition to change, but yes, I and many others believe change is needed in our municipal governance. Yes, we have had several studies and we should get on with it, but no, not with a confrontational and dictatorial process which tells the citizens that the proposals of the most credible and detailed studies will be overridden and essentially ignored and, on top of that, does so without providing any real, lucid rationale for doing so.

There is no need for the government to fear the electorate if it is doing the right thing. There is no rationale behind the view that the government must get this done now, this year, because in another year, 1998, eyes will be turned to the forthcoming election.

I want to repeat that I and, I know, many others believe that change in our governance is needed. It will be welcomed if done in a reasonable and reasoned process. It will be a plus for the government in a forthcoming election, but pursuing the present anti-democratic stance will be its insidious, devastating and ultimately terminal cancer and undoing.

#### 1010

Approximately one year before the introduction of Bill 103, the omnibus bill was presented. There was outcry against that bill. It was seen in its comprehensiveness and executive regulatory powers as undemocratic by some. Many Ontarians let it pass; they couldn't believe that Ontario's democratic and due process traditions could be at risk. But it was a wake-up call. Even Premier Harris, on the 1996 anniversary of his election, mused that the omnibus bill might have been a mistake in so far as trying to accomplish too much too quickly.

Now a new anti-democratic process is under way which has unleashed a torrent of grass-roots anger and activism like none of us has never seen, and it is totally bipartisan. Have you on the committee witnessed it?

The opposition is so strong that any attempt to steamroll ahead by the government will, I believe, leave a

fester, destabilizing pustule of suspicion and discontent. That will be twinned with continuing political opposition at the local level and the certainty of administrative turmoil, if not chaos, in municipal administration and services as rather frantic attempts are made to try to sort out the many complexities.

I have seen many business mergers. They are almost always difficult, even with goodwill and agreement. Without that, certainly if they are forced, the difficulties are multiplied many times and chances of success are radically diminished. If the proposed amalgamation should now proceed, the twins of dissension and turmoil will inevitably result in economic instability, which is the bane of business and the antithesis of a healthy economy.

Risk is always an element of change, but the extreme risk which we now face is not necessary. It can and must be avoided. This sequence of events, this summary, speaks for itself:

(1) We, with the government, dutifully awaited the Golden report. When it was released there was some political opposition to it, but there was significant popular respect and support, which has subsequently grown.

(2) We, with the government, awaited the findings of the Crombie panel. While there was the usual wrangling about their activities, the panel process enjoyed wide public respect.

(3) But before the panel's work was completed, rumours circulated, fed by vague and cryptic statements by Mr Leach, suggesting that he was taking already determined steps, no matter what, implying that little or nothing is working well in the municipalities, fostering confrontation and providing no process for reasonable discussion.

(4) That confusion threw local politicians into the difficult position of trying to respond quickly without meaningful discussion with the province. In these circumstances, their attempt to respond was predictably short of the mark.

(5) Mr Leach made it clear that he intended to proceed, no matter what citizens thought. He distributed an advertising circular and was found in contempt of the Legislature.

(6) A barrage — a blitzkrieg — of legislation was introduced, clearly interrelated, with enormous economic and related consequences, with extremely short implementation schedules, containing proposals at odds with those in the earlier studies and offering no lucid rationale for the differences.

(7) A public outcry has resulted and is growing in which all parts of the community are taking part. People not usually involved in politics are engaged and deeply concerned. They find fault with the legislation, but it is with the process that they express outrage.

It is essential to restore confidence that democratic process will be respected. Tinkering with the legislation is not going to achieve that. I ask that this committee recommend to the government in the strongest possible terms that there be a fresh start: (1) a white paper, lucid and complete, supported by studies and data for its proposals; (2) a process for comprehensive, intelligent and reasoned input and debate; and then (3) legislation which reflects the best of what is learned in that process.

May I direct my final remarks to the members of this committee who are also members of the Conservative caucus. I ask that you use all of your powers of reason and persuasion to achieve this fresh start. I am a strong believer in our party system. I came from Conservative roots. During my lifetime I have voted for all of the three major parties and I'll continue to vote for the party which makes most sense. Your party, the Conservative Party, has been and can be a credible option for the electorate.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry. You have gone past your time. Can I ask you to just —

**Mr Stephenson:** I am just winding up. If you are truly in touch with the immense outcry, do you really believe the process now seen as anti-democratic will, if not changed, be overlooked? Do you personally want to be a part of that? Can you imagine trying to govern Ontario, if you are so fortunate as to retain power, without any representation in your caucus from Metro? If the economic engine of Toronto chugs rather than purrs, or belches smoke and stalls, then you know Ontario will follow. Do you want to risk, without needing to do so, becoming Ontario's equivalent to the government of R.B. Bennett?

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry to interrupt you, but we have gone well past the time. Thank you very much, Mr Stephenson.

**Mr Stephenson:** I have one final comment. They're not threats. These are genuine concerns. For the health of your party, your government and all of us, give us a new and fully democratic process. You will be lauded for it personally, as will our government. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

#### TOM FIORE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Tom Fiore. Good morning, Mr Fiore, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Tom Fiore:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen of the committee. My name is Tom Fiore. I'm more than pleased to be here to give you my two cents' worth. I know you've been doing this for several weeks, and just from the few people I've heard, I can imagine there has been a lot of repetition in the presentations.

I basically believe that when you come right down to it, the arguments for this particular thing are whether this glass of water is half empty or half full. I basically like to think that it's half full. I have great confidence in the political system. In fact, I have supported many candidates. I'm quite involved politically. I enjoy all levels of politics and I seem to feel that in the end common sense does prevail — pardon the pun.

#### 1020

I thought I'd give you an overview of where I'm coming from in regard to why I think the way I do. In 1949, when I first arrived at Union Station with my family when I was four years old, coming from sunny Italy to Union Station in December I can remember to this day that morning when we walked out of Union Station and behold there was the skyline of the city of Toronto, the Royal York Hotel. Yes, that was in fact the skyline of Toronto at that time.

At that point the realization came to my father as has become folklore among people in the Italian community that the stories he had heard about the streets in Toronto being paved with gold were not true. In fact, the streets here were not even paved and we were expected to pave them. We continued on. We first moved to the Junction, Keele and Dundas — wow. It's still there. The Junction is still there, Keele and Dundas is still there, and I can go back there, and I often do, to show my son where we came from at one point. It's great going there.

Shortly thereafter, we moved up to Davenport and Avenue Road, the Annex. It was a beautiful area. I went to Cubs in the church basement of one of the local churches there, and the Annex is still there. Shortly after that, we moved up to Yonge and Eglinton, north Toronto — yes, north Toronto was in fact north Toronto — and lived there for many years, went to high school, and north Toronto is still there.

The neighbourhoods to me were based around where the local hockey rink was. Eglinton Park had a hockey rink. That was our community. If we wanted to play with the kids in other areas, we'd go to Chaplin Crescent. We'd walk down that far, or if we were really ambitious, we'd go to Leaside. That was an adventure. But by the time I was 13, my then hockey coach would take us up to Downsview or Weston. They're still there. At one time Roger Neilson — yes, the same Roger Neilson was my peewee coach — was so adventurous that he would take us up to Bolton. All these places are still there. It has been a natural evolution. In regard to this discussion, again I feel that it's either half empty or half full. I like to look at it as half full.

To get specific in regard to that, I believe unification in Metro is the natural evolution of our urban reality. I believe in one vision, I believe in one economy and I believe in one culture. I think within Metropolitan Toronto from King City to the lake, from Etobicoke, maybe even Mississauga, to Scarborough it really is one. When we go away and we go back to Italy or wherever we go for our holidays, there's only one place we say we're from. We're from Toronto. When we cheer for our local baseball team, hockey team, basketball team, again it's one vision, it's one economy, it's one culture.

Unification for me will increase political accountability and help end duplication and waste. I firmly believe that, as I've heard others speakers say before, knowing the local fire chief — I remember knowing the local fire chief. Well, there are six chiefs. Is that really necessary? So many things just keep on going on and on like that. Is this duplication creating waste? I believe it does.

I have a feeling that the approximately 30% voter turnout at municipal elections clearly demonstrates that citizens either don't understand or don't care about municipal government. The double-tier municipal government creates in my mind confusion. As I have been reading in the media, approximately 70% of essential services are already unified: police, TTC, water, sewers, garbage, major roads and traffic, ambulance, day care, welfare. Surely we can unify the remaining 30% of services under one municipal government. We only have 30% to go. I don't think that's much.

Next, unification means one powerful voice for economic development in our region. As the saying goes, "Too many cooks spoil the broth." Too many existing cities are chasing the same international business opportunities, creating confusion for potential investors and putting us at a disadvantage with larger cities in the United States. Would it not hold true that too mayors spoil business opportunities?

The status quo is not an option. You've heard that several times on the pro side, and I guess you've heard contradictory on the other side. It's time to consolidate our gains as a growing metropolis, not isolate ourselves within six city boundaries. It's time to promote growth, not isolationism. I firmly believe there is potential for savings and that vision will be up to the collective will of the newly elected 44 members of one unified Toronto to make it work.

That's basically what I have to say on the positive side of my particular argument in support of unification of Toronto or of the greater Toronto area, Metro Toronto. But one point that in fact really irritates me is the process by which the referendum is being conducted. I really can't make sense of the procedure. There are rules for this, rules for that. When it comes to voting no for a megacity, well, I may vote no for a megacity, but I would vote yes for a unified Toronto. Who is selecting the words?

In my apartment building, and it has been in the media consistently, I thought I was the only one. I was going to phone down and say: "Hey, look what's happening. There are all these envelopes here. They're just going in the garbage, or are they going in the garbage?" But then of course as we've been hearing in the media, it's rampant throughout Toronto.

There is no respectability for the way this referendum is being conducted as far as I'm concerned. No matter what the outcome, whether it's 100% for amalgamation or 100% against amalgamation, it's irrelevant in my particular point of view because it is not justified in its approach. It's non-binding. That's one particular aspect. I guess that's the legal aspect. But to me, the point is that it just hasn't been done in any particular way which holds credibility.

Anyway, ladies and gentlemen. I'm pleased that I was able to share those opinions. I have several friends who were on the march down Yonge Street and we've had several good cappuccinos, espressos and drinks over the matter. But I believe that parade, which was staged as pit bull diplomacy, will go the same way as the parade it was meant to mimic, the 1837 so-called rebellion. Everyone got pumped up for that at Montgomery's Tavern, therefore, they had all the juices required to be motivated down Yonge Street, but one shot and everyone scattered and life went on.

1030

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Fiore. We've come to the end of your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward and making a presentation.

**Mr Fiore:** That was 10 minutes, right on?

**The Chair:** Yes. A little bit beyond actually.

**Mr Fiore:** Jeez. I don't even get a question from Mr Marchese.

**The Chair:** No, not this time. Thank you very much for coming forward to make your presentation today.

ALAN SAMUEL

**The Chair:** Would Alan Samuel please come forward. Good morning, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Alan Samuel:** I have lived or worked in the city of Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto for over 30 years and I currently am teaching at the University of Toronto just a short walk from this room. I'm very glad to have the opportunity to make some specific points in connection with the proposal to amalgamate the municipalities which make up Metropolitan Toronto.

In general, I think it has been said over and over again to the committee that, more or less, the current governmental structure works reasonably well and that it works at least well enough to make Toronto a choice internationally as an excellent, indeed the best, city in which to live and work.

I think we should consider some of the reasons for this. In my opinion, a very important reason for the satisfactory condition of Toronto today lies in the governmental structure, in fact the large number of municipal politicians with whom we work. The structure and its reasons for success can be understood, I think, if we look back some 20 years to the important ward boundaries case heard by A.J. Kennedy of the Ontario Municipal Board and argued by the distinguished jurist, the late J.J. Robinette.

At issue then was the layout of proposed wards in a redistricting system. For a long time, the city had been made up of wards in a so-called strip system, which mingled north and south Toronto, and also mixed communities of very divergent interests. Argued before the municipal board was the proposition that democracy is best served if cohesive communities are able to obtain their own representation and are not combined with other communities with other needs creating the need for representatives who will balance interests and decide which interests will be represented. The board accepted this argument, created block wards, and the differing communities of the city thenceforth obtained representation of their needs and created a political system in which council learned of, and then arbitrated, many of the issues.

The proposed representative system for an amalgamated Toronto overturns this fundamental and vitally important board decision and it destroys the pattern of representation in this city. To reduce the number of civic representatives to 44, whether or not districted along the lines of existing ridings for higher levels of government, will inevitably re-establish the sort of local representation in which the representatives must balance too many different interests.

You yourselves, in your own experience I'm sure, are aware of the difficulty of deciding an issue when the interests of your constituents run counter to what you perceive as the larger interest or are contrary to party policy. You yourselves, operating at a higher level of government, and federal representatives too, have these problems, but because the issues you decide are rarely

narrow and local in nature, you can serve a fairly wide area and a large number of people.

Local government is different. Issues are often very, very narrow indeed and related to matters like one-way streets, times of garbage collection, building standards, modifications of established planning rules, development matters and the like. Here we want representatives who will be answerable to residents in the communities affected. We want someone who can represent the interests of north Toronto, of High Park, of Swansea, Rosedale, Rexdale, Cabbagetown, Willowdale, Victoria Park, and so on. We do not want a small number of representatives, each of whom will be forced to balance not only the issues you must balance, but also the contrary and contradictory interests of their own constituents.

With only 44 representatives, the costs of running for local office will go up, and there will be fewer of the people who work their way into political life through local organizations, the school board, and then aldermanic races. It will simply cost more to run an aldermanic race. Fewer people will be able to find financial support to run or be self-funding, with the result that the power of money will have an even greater role in local politics than it has now. Since in Toronto political decisions often have ramifications of great financial gain, this funding pressure can distort local politics seriously.

Basically I am saying that for all the desire to save money, reducing the number of local politicians is not a good idea. It may surprise you to hear someone speaking out for politicians, and I am not arguing that all citizens love them so well that they would want hundreds and hundreds. But politicians serve a very useful purpose in our society. We may complain about them, make nasty remarks about them, we may challenge their intelligence and their integrity, but we need them and we need them in sufficient numbers to make our system work. At the local level, we need enough of them to ensure that most of the physical communities in Metro Toronto obtain their own representation so that the local politicians are constantly brought to represent their constituents and not those who are able to finance them.

If you accept my contention that politicians, in reasonable and necessary numbers, are a good thing, then the amalgamation issue takes on different colours. It's a good thing to have a mayor representing the interests of North York or Etobicoke, which are different communities from, say, Scarborough or Toronto. It may make sense to include East York and York in the city of Toronto in a future amalgamation as these three units have much in common. You will also see the benefit of maintaining the Metro structure to deal with issues that are city-wide, matters of policing and perhaps of firefighting, which, however, may really answer better to local control.

I agree that it is frustrating and confusing to citizens to deal with the two levels of government, and there may well be ways to improve the current system, but trashing it completely is not the answer for the reasons I have stated. If you ask me to choose between the status quo and an amalgamation of the sort proposed, I would have no difficulty in choosing the status quo as a far superior form of local government, with all its difficulties.

Finally, if the provincial Legislature is attempting to ensure the preservation of the high quality of life of Metropolitan Toronto, then let it deal with the greatest threat first. That threat is the disparity of taxation between Metro and the so-called 905 communities. There are many reasons for this disparity and many unfortunate results of it, and it will ultimately lead to the collapse of the central core community and economy.

There have been many proposals for dealing with that and some of them are currently embodied in legislation on the order paper. I suggest that this problem be solved first and then, when the greater context is suitable for the prosperity of the urban core, let's look at core government again in light of the decisions made for the greater Toronto area as a whole.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale):** Mr Samuel, how do you specifically propose to deal with assessment reform without amalgamation?

**Mr Samuel:** I think assessment reform can be dealt with —

**Mr Hastings:** What form of assessment reform do you favour, unit value over the other two?

**Mr Samuel:** You're referring to the current proposals for market value assessment?

**Mr Hastings:** AVA.

**Mr Samuel:** I don't think the two are necessarily tied together at all. The provincial government could change assessment reform completely without affecting municipal government at all. I don't think the two are tied together. I agree that it is necessary to change the assessment process.

**Mr Hastings:** What level of taxation on your own property do you pay today: modestly low, significantly high or in between?

**Mr Samuel:** I own a small apartment building, so I'm probably overassessed at the current time.

**Mr Hastings:** Have you appealed your property tax?

**Mr Samuel:** I haven't appealed the property tax, no.

**Mr Hastings:** Do you realize that under the existing great system of assessment that about \$100 million annually go through assessment appeals?

**Mr Samuel:** Yes, I do realize that.

**Mr Hastings:** Do you accept that as a part of the status quo and that there's not much you can do about it and we should just live with it?

**Mr Samuel:** Frankly, in what I have said today I'm not addressing myself to the issue of assessment at all; I'm addressing myself to the issue of amalgamating the municipal governments. In terms of assessment reform, I would personally, I suppose, benefit if the current legislation goes through. I'm certainly not going to address myself to that issue at the moment.

The disparity of assessment between Metro and the external communities is one that I think is a serious one for Metro and I trust that reform will fix that. But I don't think the two issues of how property is assessed and whether we have 44 representatives are tied together at all, and I'm addressing myself to the second issue.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Samuel, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1040

KEITH MARTIN

**The Chair:** Would Keith Martin please come forward. Good morning, Mr Martin, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Keith Martin:** I want to thank you all very much for the opportunity of appearing here today.

I'm really here as a private citizen of the city of Toronto. I am concerned with some of the issues arising out of the proposed bill to amalgamate the five cities and one borough of Metro Toronto into one governmental body.

I currently live in the Don Vale neighbourhood of Toronto. It's a neighbourhood which most people think of largely as Cabbagetown and it's represented in the provincial Legislature by the honourable Al Leach, who is bringing forward the amalgamation legislation.

I can already see a pattern here; most people want to reveal to you the story of how they ended up in Toronto, and I think that might be an interesting story out of all of the collective presentations you've had, but I have lived here for 30 years. I've also had the opportunity at various times to live in other cities, other communities, even other provinces and small villages, and these various living environments have given me some perspective on living in Toronto and led me to the decision to live here, to choose to live here and to choose to live in an historic neighbourhood and to participate in the life of the city.

It's in my professional life that I've run across a number of interesting parallels or concerns that may have some light to shed on some of the concerns around amalgamation.

I have a small company which raises funds for non-profit agencies in the arts, health care and other social concerns. I am not involved in the glamorous areas of fund-raising, but rather I design and carry out small donor programs to acquire small donors, primarily using the telephone.

Telefunding can be likened to hand-to-hand combat in fund-raising. There's no glitter, no glamour, little recognition and certainly no prestige. However, there is the satisfaction of helping worthy organizations to continue their work and in some cases even to survive. Occasionally there's also some satisfaction in knowing that politicians envy us telemarketers for our high standing on the trust scale.

We also feel the pulse of the community on a daily basis because of the feedback we get directly from the people. It's this area that I wish to speak about, an area of feelings, concerns, ideas and emotions.

Shortly after the announcement of the introduction of Bill 103 I started to hear media comments from the opposition to this legislation. As the days and weeks have gone by, these comments have resonated with some of the feelings and impressions that I have gotten in the almost 12 years of carrying on my activity in direct fund-raising. I have become dismayed and somewhat appalled by the acrimony of the public protest and some of the overheated comments. The attacks have often been highly personal and in my opinion even vicious.

The question I have to ask is, if the concern is maintaining neighbourhoods, how can we do so if we can't maintain simple civility? It's always been my feeling that neighbourhoods should engender goodwill toward others and that living harmoniously in an urban environment requires a higher degree of common courtesy.

I am concerned that regardless of the outcome of the proposed legislation, we must be able to find a way to live together in the future.

I support the amalgamation legislation because I see it as a recognition of what already exists: that the majority of municipal services are already amalgamated and that this is a logical evolution in the growth of the city.

However, I do not think that amalgamation will destroy our existing neighbourhoods any more than Toronto's annexation of Yorkville in 1883, due to the village's need to pay for infrastructure, including roads and sewers, destroyed that neighbourhood.

While I feel that for many people the concern for their neighbourhoods is very heartfelt and genuine, I feel it's wrong to place undue concerns upon this proposed legislation and. In fact, I feel that a lot of the protest and concern and heat are not necessarily related to this piece of legislation. It is merely the touchstone for long-standing feelings of concern, frustration, alienation and fear.

The reaction to the legislation is only part of a progression in the decline in the quality of life in Toronto. In my professional activity we talk to many generous people who have built volunteerism and donation into their lives. However, we in Toronto are not growing new philanthropists. Toronto is currently Canada's black hole for direct fund-raising. Increasingly the people of Toronto are disengaging from the social needs around them.

Despite the acknowledgment of financial need, despite the acknowledgment of the usefulness of the institution in need, Torontonians are more likely to say no to non-profit solicitations than any other citizens in the country.

This is not a function of lack of financial resources. The most generous Canadians in terms of per capita donations are the people of Newfoundland, our poorest province in terms of per capita income. What exists and what is concerning me is that this is a matter of generosity of spirit, the willingness to sacrifice and contribute to a common goal.

Increasingly Torontonians define the donor as somebody else. I get comments like, "Well, sure I've been coming to your theatre for many years and I know that someone else is paying for half of my ticket, but why are you approaching me for any money?" Or, "Why should I give you money when I have an unlimited supply of good advice?"

For several years in the late 1980s and early 1990s I lived for most of the year in a small city where I raised funds for a large theatre. At the end of every season I would return to Toronto and each year I would progressively become disturbed by the decline in the quality of life in Toronto.

People on public transit and in public meeting areas would look grimmer, greyer and more desperate. The behaviour became more erratic as pressure mounted. Even at rush-hour and in normal day-to-day living activities people avoided eye contact. They were more

and more self-contained and they seemed to avoid interaction by withdrawing from each other out of fear. In my opinion, a great deal of the resistance to amalgamation legislation is merely a reflection of the predisposition of Torontonians to say no to anything.

However, that being said, there are good reasons for concern about the amalgamation process. Will some of the taxes that were applied in the 1980s, like the parking tax, road taxes and such that seemed to target Toronto specifically, be removed? Will the removal of the tax burden from school taxes and the assumption of new tax responsibilities put us on an even footing with jurisdictions like Mississauga, which seemed to have been the main beneficiary of the previous tax inequities? Will the commitment of monitoring the effects of change and the establishment of emergency funds in the areas of social programs help to quickly establish a balanced financial and tax situation? But most important, will the people of Toronto regain their normal degree of generosity and take a more personal responsibility for making improvements in the quality of life in Toronto?

I am satisfied that, given the record of this provincial government in doing what it says it will do, that these problems will be fully addressed and that these potential problems can be overcome, but only with goodwill.

In my opinion, Toronto has much to gain from a single tier of municipal government in terms of a clearer mandate to plan and to meet future challenges. However, I can understand a certain amount of public confusion, because if we really can't trust a government to do what it says, then just whom can we distrust?

I also have observed a strange phenomenon. Despite the fact that many of the solutions for our problems — economic, social, environmental — are global, universal or cooperative, there is a desire, usually on the part of politicians, to break up responsibilities into smaller geopolitical units.

I feel that the scale and nature of the proposed one-tier Toronto government is appropriate and sufficient to coordinate the planning and to provide the required service needs of the population of an amalgamated Toronto.

**1050**

If it is helpful, I would like to provide another wry and unfortunately kind of cynical perspective on the amalgamation process. This is outlined in a process called the Six Phases of a Project as defined by the Centre for the Study of Murphy's Law. The first phase is always elation, followed by confusion, followed by disillusionment, followed by the search for the guilty, punishment for the innocent, and distinction and honours for the non-involved.

I hope this doesn't mean that Mel Lastman will become the mayor of the amalgamated city and will allow it to be renamed Melville. Instead I'm simply asking that we tone down the rhetoric and that we practise living together, with respect for differences of opinion, and that we as Torontonians regain our generosity of spirit and contribute to those institutions which define us as a civilized, caring community. Regardless of what the communities are labelled, I feel that these are the community values that must be protected. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Martin. You have exhausted your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this morning to make your presentation.

### TOM JAKOBEK

**The Chair:** Would Tom Jakobek please come forward. Good morning, Mr Jakobek, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Tom Jakobek:** Mr Chairman and members of the committee, needless to say I don't envy any of you and I certainly wouldn't want to say anything bad about a room in this building, but I can't imagine a worse job than being cooped up in these hearings in this room the whole time, so I'll try to make my points as quickly as I possibly can.

Obviously change is inevitable and change is absolutely necessary for our cities to survive. City politicians have been negligent, in my opinion, in not coming forward with the need for change.

I'd like to talk to you for a little bit about the city of Toronto and about just how we're doing. I'm the city's budget chief and have been, off and on, for five years and I want to tell you that the city's financial picture is not a pretty one. This is the city's operating budget, the entire \$511,276,540.23, right there. I just finished it on Friday, and I have to tell you that having taken it from \$627 million in 1992 down to \$511 million, there isn't a lot more to cut.

We could probably look at closing a firehall or two and extending the amount of time it takes to get to a house. We could probably talk about cutting back on some of the wading pool and swimming pool hours, but I'm not sure we want to. Yes, we could talk about imposing new user fees, so if your kid wants to learn to swim, we charge you \$25 or something, but again, we've looked at it I think from a fairly intelligent point of view and said we don't think we want to do that.

The reality is that there really isn't much more to cut in this budget, and yet the need to cut down and continue to stop raising taxes couldn't be any more evident or necessary. It costs today to rent office space in downtown Toronto — 66.3% of the cost is municipal taxation. They can't survive. We can't raise it. Forget about just the home owners. Business can't afford to be in Toronto, so we don't have an option of raising taxes, we really can't find the room to cut any more, so some form of change, some way of doing things differently, is necessary.

That bright idea didn't come from Queen's Park, necessarily; it did come originally from Toronto city council — or do you remember? — back in 1991 when we felt so compelled that the system was broken and that the system needed to be fixed that we actually held a referendum, a legitimate one. The only problem was that we only asked people one question; we only gave them one option: "Will you support us in getting rid of one level of municipal government, that being Metro council?" Mr Colle will remember that. It wasn't a very fair referendum, in the sense that we only asked one question, but the result was absolute. The result was two thirds of the people saying, "We agree, one level has got to go."

So I say to you that what you need to do as a Legislature is to deal with the financial crisis which exists, and let there be no question about it: There is a financial crisis in our cities.

I appreciate the fact that there are always different viewpoints. It's a shame, actually, that the first viewpoint on this issue came from six mayors, because a picture of six mayors was evidence enough to most people that there were six too many. I think it has also been unfortunate that Mr Sewell has now become the spokesperson in place of the six mayors. Why, you say? I served with John. John didn't support the CN Tower, he didn't support the domed stadium, he didn't support the convention centre, the Scotia Plaza or, for that matter, the Eaton Centre, which is celebrating their anniversary. You can't be any more negative and against things, and I defy any one of you today to tell me that you'd tear down any one of those structures. I really don't think we've had a good position put forward on what the alternatives are, because change has to happen. There has to be something that's coming forward.

Four cities, in my opinion, if that's the suggestion, isn't the answer. The city of Toronto is not economically strong enough, financially viable enough, to handle the strain of most of York and/or East York. We can't do it, plain and simple.

Sure, Mayor Nunziata will take me to task and say that I'm wrong when I say that York is for all intents and purposes bankrupt. She will tell me that it's not true that the city is always sending fire trucks into York. It is true. I can give you the run sheets. She will tell me that it's not true that her sewers and roads and facilities are dilapidated by most other municipality standards and that a lot of their capital projects are in sorry need of repair. In fact, the most general and the most small-c conservative estimate is somewhere between \$62 million and \$71 million. But the reality is that she has a problem there.

East York — wonderful place, I know it well; I worked in East York for many years — is holding its own, but that's all it's doing. East York is holding its own even though it continues to falter, and it continues to falter because its tax assessment is gone. Originally when it was put forward as a municipality, they even went so far as to cut below Danforth Avenue in order to give it what's called Shoppers World at Victoria Park and Danforth to increase the assessment. It never took off, never happened, and now when you go up to Laird and Eglinton, huge factories that covered an entire site are gone and they have a big, new, modern Canadian Tire store. It doesn't pay the taxes that are necessary to sustain that municipality. When you drive from my constituency into East York, the roads are shot, the facilities are second-rate. It's not holding its own.

We in the city of Toronto can't afford the huge burden of taking over those two municipalities, so you'd have to carve it differently. It's not just the drop in assessment, it's not just the dilapidated infrastructures, it's not just the operating problem; it's the huge debt we've incurred. Right now the six municipalities in Metro have incurred a deficit, and this is not just a deficit with regard to outstanding liabilities. That goes right off the page in terms of pensions and other things. I'm talking hard

deficits where we've just spent more money on capital projects than we should have. The total debt is \$864.9 million. It's almost \$1 billion.

Let me tell you something. The city of Toronto, which was at \$237 million in 1994, and which has brought it down to \$138 million, has done so because to a large extent we had a huge reserve that we could draw on, called "the sale of the Langstaff farm lands," which we used to help us get towards a debt-free situation; but secondly, we've cut back on our capital projects. I'm getting complaints every day about potholes. I've been around for 17 years. I've never had as many complaints about potholes. The reason for it is that we have had to cut back.

That debt is absolutely overwhelming for some of the smaller municipalities. Think about it. Etobicoke spends 13 cents of every dollar it receives in taxes to pay down a \$49.5-million debt. York is at \$21.4 million. So even when they tell you they've got their debt under control, the only reason they have it under control is they've had to cut back seriously on capital projects which are already in need of repair.

What's the answer? Sure, we need things like federal government infrastructure programs, which really saved a lot of us recently. The three improvements in East York that Mayor Prue argued with me over on the radio were all paid for through provincial, federal and municipal dollars, through the infrastructure program. Those programs do work, they do help us.

1100

I'm not a member of the Legislature and I don't want to profess that I know what you should do, I don't, and I'm not an expert on this place; I've been in this building for a deputation and made a deputation five times in my entire career, so I only come up here when I think it's important. But I want to be bold enough to say to you today that I think that today the role of the opposition is not to oppose everything the government does; I think the role of the opposition is to make sure that the government says what it's going to do.

As I see it, the government has acted because of a lack of action. With the greatest respect to the Bob Rae government, or for that matter the David Peterson government, we didn't act. We simply didn't act. Municipalities have known this is coming for a long time. We didn't act. We didn't do anything. We haven't proposed any alternatives that are viable. We haven't suggested anything other than trying to keep a mayor or a number of members of city councils elected. That's all we've ever done. So this government is acting.

I tell you that the greatest encumbrance on you as a government, for those of you who are members of the government, are two things: First, your financial changes have to balance. There are too many people like me around who have the books who can tell you that. They have to balance. If I was in a negotiating position, I'd throw in the kitchen sink at the first announcement too, but at some point you have to decide on what's fair and what's not fair and you've got to make sure it balances, because you can't afford to have the most important engine in your province stalled. Second, on assessment, whatever system you pick, just publicize the results so

that people know what the results of those assessments are before the legislation is actually enacted.

That's all I have to say and I want to thank you for your time.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Jacobek, for coming forward this morning and making a presentation.

**Mr Jakobek:** I brought the seven phone books, Mr Chairman, for everyone to see, because obviously there's some saving in just the printing costs.

### KEVIN GARLAND

**The Chair:** Would Kevin Garland please come forward? Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mrs Kevin Garland:** Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, for the opportunity to speak today. Just quickly, my name is Kevin Garland, and I am a woman. I was born and raised in Toronto and I have two children and now three grandchildren. I'm a member of the board of directors of the United Way and also of the National Ballet. In my professional life I have a master's degree in urban and regional planning and I've spent over 20 years in the real estate industry. Most recently, I'm with CIBC.

First, let me say that I absolutely support the need for reform of local government — I think it's essential — and that the status quo is just not an option. However, I have to tell you that I am very deeply concerned and deeply opposed to the changes that have been proposed. Coming out of my corporate background and experience, I've been through a number of large corporate reorganizations in my life. They tend to be very disruptive, very difficult in human terms and also very difficult in economic terms. The only way they are effective is if they have very clear objectives and goals going in. I think there are some very clear objectives and goals for municipal government in the greater Toronto area.

First, regional coordination of economic development and of the infrastructure that supports it: This is something we simply don't have today. We have a very fragmented and competitive and inequitable government system that operates over the whole greater Toronto area.

Second, we have to level the playing field on property taxes. As many of the speakers before me have noted, there are huge inequalities. Particularly, the business tax on both small business and on large business in the downtown is completely inequitable and is driving businesses to look elsewhere, and it isn't always elsewhere even in Toronto or in Ontario. It's elsewhere in Canada and then elsewhere out of the country altogether and that's very frightening.

Third, in Toronto we've enjoyed a really extraordinary quality of life and it's one of our big competitive advantages in a global economy. The fact that people choose to live downtown, to live in the older suburbs, to live in the suburbs and that they have that choice is one of our great strengths. It has to do with the fact that we have a diversity of neighbourhoods that are safe and strong, and that we have a multiplicity of ethnic communities that live together reasonably harmoniously and that we're able to respond with varying service levels to their needs.

Finally, criteria for local government reform needs to be clear accountability. People need to feel that they can

understand that they can affect, that they can have an impact on local government, and it needs to be accountable.

One of my concerns with the present plan is it doesn't meet any of these tests. It doesn't do any of these things. It does nothing to deal with the regional fragmentation or the need for a single economic unit. It simply ignores the fact that the GTA now exists in its present unwieldy form. It clearly doesn't save money. All the studies we've seen over the past few months have shown it doesn't save money to amalgamate and create a megacity.

It does abolish effective local government and deeply damages and removes people's ability to understand and to respond, to deliver service at the local level and to understand and effect that delivery of service.

Finally, because the implementation plans are so unclear at the moment, my concern is that it's going to lead to at least three or four years of extreme disruption to the economy, extreme disruption to human services, just as Toronto is barely pulling itself out of the most difficult recession I've seen in my lifetime.

Mr Jakobek, who preceded me, said he hadn't seen any reasonable alternatives to the current proposal. I would heartily disagree. Having read the Golden report which was provincially funded and well-thought-out, with two years of serious work with some very good consulting studies to back it up, it laid out some very clear guidelines for a very clear alternative and a viable one, which was that you would devolve as much accountability and service delivery as possible to the local level of government, while establishing a GTA-wide level of government to deal with economic issues and regional infrastructure issues that need to be coordinated.

I simply cannot understand the unwillingness of the government to deal with and come to terms with these issues. I cannot see any benefit to creating a megacity that doesn't deal with any of these issues. I don't believe that the government is here to hurt Toronto, as much of the rhetoric has led us to believe, but I just don't understand and I would certainly appreciate it if anyone on the committee could give me an understanding why it is we're proceeding in this way, which seems to me to meet none of the critical issues that are before us. That's all I have to say.

1110

**Mr Colle:** Thank you very much, Mrs Garland. In terms of the uncertainty, and maybe to try and point out why the government is in this mad rush, essentially there's a linkage. They are about to introduce a massive new tax system into Metro Toronto which will be very unpopular. In fact, it's so unpopular they're refusing to release the results of the impact studies on assessment. They've done that in the same week. On top of that they're basically abolishing local school representation into one mega-board of 300,000 students. Then you have this megacity, this big, huge government they're creating. That is why there is no plan, no business plan. How would you figure out your taxes?

**Mrs Garland:** You can't, obviously. Although I have to say that I do agree with the need for market value assessment. I do agree with the need to reform the property tax system in the GTA. I think that's essential. Also, a previous speaker mentioned the \$100 million in

assessment under appeal at any one time. The tax base is eroding and the result is further and further need to increase taxes in the downtown. As someone who is deeply involved in business in the downtown, I'm very concerned about that.

**Mr Colle:** I guess the critical point there, whether you agree or disagree with market value assessment, is I think it's incumbent upon the government to release its neighbourhood impact studies so a business or a homeowner can find out how much money they're going to have to spend on property tax over the next number of years.

**Mrs Garland:** I certainly wouldn't question that, Mr Colle.

**Mr Colle:** In terms of the alternatives, you mention an alternative that has gone through detailed analysis. The most detailed analysis has been the Golden report, which looks at the GTA and at strengthening local government, yet the government totally rejects this because it doesn't fit its agenda, whatever that agenda is. Are you in support basically of strengthening the local governments into a federation of the GTA local governments?

**Mrs Garland:** Absolutely. I don't doubt there is some need for reform of the local government as well. I'm concerned, particularly by the previous speaker's account of what's happening in York and East York. But I don't think that creating a megacity of the type that's being proposed is the way to solve that problem. What it leaves totally unaddressed is the issue of the GTA. When Metro was created in 1967, it took into account the whole of the economic unit that was Toronto at that time. Toronto's economic unit now is much bigger than that and the failure to address that strikes me as being frankly just irrational.

**Mr Colle:** As you know, Mayor Hazel McCallion said this is a mega-mistake because it doesn't create a proper balance in the GTA to address those long-term goals that we have to achieve in terms of being competitive in terms of coordination.

**Mrs Garland:** It's a major concern. We are now playing on a global playing field competitively and we need the strength to be able to do that. I can only see that happening at the GTA level. I just don't see a bigger version of Metro being able to do it.

**Mr Sergio:** Just a quick question if we have a few seconds: The board of trade came out swinging against the report because of the impact it would have on businesses, especially small businesses within Metro, a \$7,900 increase per year, let alone the residential portion. How do you feel that any business in Metro Toronto's going to be hit with almost \$8,000 a year?

**Mrs Garland:** I have to say I'm deeply concerned. As someone who watches both small business and big business in the business I'm in, I am well aware that given the increasing level of communications technology it's so easy for business to move now. My own organization — and I'm not speaking for them, obviously — has moved two major call centres out of Ontario completely, one to Halifax and one to Regina, because it costs less to operate there. Those decisions are becoming easier and easier every year as it is easier and easier to communicate electronically. It deeply concerns me that property tax and occupancy cost is now a huge amount of people's operating budget and it's the one you look at and target.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs Garland, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

PALMERSTON AREA  
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**The Chair:** Would D'Arcy Robert please come forward? Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mr D'Arcy Robert:** Thank you for the opportunity. I am the convenor of the Palmerston Area Residents' Association. I have given you a handout here just in bullet form and I'll try to keep to the time.

I am a representative of a residents' association which is just to the west of Queen's Park. This is made up of a group of concerned and involved residents who are both tenants and owners, and both tenants and owners are on the executive. They are also members and non-members of various political parties. We have one concern right away: Is the residents' association going to be replaced by a neighbourhood council and is a neighbourhood council not just another word for a residents' association picked by the local residents?

Process: We have concerns about the process because it was my understanding that for a government it is necessary to not just be fair, but to appear to be fair.

The timing of the beginning of this announcement about amalgamation — obviously I'm going to speak about downloading too because the downloading issues are probably even more important to us than the amalgamation. The timing of the initial announcement during the Hanukkah and Christmas holidays, the downloading week where every day was another issue that was very substantial, the lack of consultation prior to any of these announcements, and then also during the holiday season the unprepared and rushed KPMG study, all lead to concern that there is even a process. Although we are thankful to have this opportunity today, these things are sort of after the fact.

We feel it's important to include people so as to feel part of the process. It's a very 1990s sort of thing, but inclusiveness is important. It makes people grasp the issue and feel part of it, which I do not believe the people of Toronto do and have for the last six to eight weeks.

I believe the taxpayers and investors deserve better. We expect a higher level of professionalism than to have a lot of these very important issues shoved at us during holiday season and at the beginning of January. We should have confidence in the process and also in the outcome. This has been mentioned by the last few speakers. There are going to be concerns. There is going to be disruption. There is no doubt there is going to be costly disruption, and while everyone is trying to deal with the costly disruption, we will be losing investment and business in this city.

The amalgamation, so we all know, is seven governments into one. We've all heard the statistics about how big it will be, bigger than many provinces. However, it's clear there are various cultures which are going to be merged. One city is not better than the other, York is not better than Etobicoke, but they are different.

As a downtown area, there is a concern about the tendency of the suburbs to vote as a bloc. I think that is

a fair thing to say. We all know people in North York have similar concerns about traffic and schools etc as people in downtown Toronto, but there is a difference. Suburbs are a post-Second World War creation and they have different issues.

I want to mention some specific matters from a meeting that the residents' association hosted on January 21 at Harbord Collegiate. Mr Marchese was there as our local MPP and also Mr Gilchrist was there as a representative of Minister Leach.

We had a woman speak very poignantly about a number of issues, but her main one was that she was a cyclist. She pointed out that cycling in North York is just not the same as it is in Toronto. The city of North York was not necessarily built for cyclists and the speed and size of the streets make it a sort of daunting process. There are different transportation needs, and I'm using this as a very simple example of that. The city of Toronto has different transportation needs than the suburbs.

There was also a man at this meeting who worked in a group home, but pointed out he was probably also all right because he was an entrepreneur. He pointed out the downtown location of many social services. The group home he worked in contained a number of residents who were not just from the city of Toronto. They were from the surrounding area, the suburbs. They were also from the 905 belt because this is where the location of the services are: in the city to a large degree.

Mayor Hall came to the meeting. She's the mayor of 650,000 people versus 2.3 million. I doubt very much she would be able to attend as many meetings. Also, along with the councillors, we are concerned about less representation because the councillors will not have as small an area, as local an area.

I think the actual costs of amalgamating 54,000 employees and a \$7-billion budget have been mentioned many times. That is going to take time. There is going to be disruption. Everyone knows it and we don't seem to be getting the solutions or hearing what possible solutions there will be, nor are we being given enough time to deal with it.

1120

I want to mention briefly the downloading of costs to municipalities. I've mentioned five here which would, I think, affect our area more.

General welfare: The municipalities will now be responsible for 50%, as opposed to 20%.

Family benefits, which are for the more permanently unemployable people: Municipalities will be responsible for 50%, as opposed to zero.

Long-term care: We all know we're all getting older. We are now, in the municipalities, going to be responsible for 50% of that cost, a cost that is clearly going up. We have been responsible for zero cost. Anyone who has had elderly family members who have had to enter a home in the last while know it's not a pretty picture at the best of times. There was confusion over some legislation implemented by the last government and now there's more change. Throw it all up in the air and see what happens.

Second to last is social housing, which is going to go from zero to 100% as a municipal responsibility. I think

we're all aware that the Metro Toronto Housing Authority hasn't exactly been a great manager of the housing and that the housing is in poor condition. I am very concerned about that cost.

**TTC:** As a downtown area, many people prefer and rely on the TTC. That cost is going to go from 50% to 100%.

**Education:** I realize this is another bill, but these are concerns that have come up in the residential area. We hear about non-educational costs. Is the music department an extra? Is heat an extra? This is what people are asking. This is what people have been told. I don't know; maybe you do.

Valid concerns over such fundamental changes: These are very fundamental changes. As we all know, people are generally concerned about their children and how they are being educated. There is a fear of more decreases in funding and obviously increases in class sizes, as outlined by the one of the panelists at our meeting — grave concerns about that. Another parent at our community meeting mentioned fewer after-school activities and extras compared to when an older sibling was at the school. These are very concrete things that people have noticed and expect to get worse.

There is also the concern about the educational money from Toronto and control going to the province. We've been raising our own money, and also the control due to the amalgamation of the school boards —

**The Chair:** Mr Robert, you're coming to the end of your allotted time. You might want to get to the conclusion.

**Mr Robert:** Speed up, okay. I think there is a need for change. As has been pointed out by Mr Jakobek, there was a referendum question which called for the elimination of the Metro level. We know there is a need for it. We believe the Trimmer, Golden and Crombie reports have all been of some use. Minister Leach, at the North Rosedale Ratepayers Association, could not come up with a city where amalgamation has worked and mentioned Toronto.

We believe that the public services are important. The residents appear to be overwhelmingly opposed to the amalgamation of the seven governments and the down-loading of the social services. We don't know what the advantages are for a downtown residential neighbourhood just to the west of Queen's Park. Meanwhile, it is heartening that during this period of uncertainty, residents of the area are working on issues such as the revitalization of College Street between Bathurst and Ossington, the Garrison Creek project, which passes southward just to the west of our area, and bylaws to enhance and maintain the vitality of Bloor and College.

Lastly, there are many people in the area who believe or are under the impression that these fundamental changes are a tax grab from the municipalities in order to fund the provincial income tax cut. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Robert.

#### NORMA PIGGOTT

**The Chair:** Would Norma Piggott please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Mrs Norma Piggott:** I'm sorry I'm a little nervous. I didn't expect so many people around. I would like to present my reasons for being in favour of the amalgamation. I've been at a lot of local meetings and find that there are a lot of vocal groups which are making a lot of noise but yet in the audience there are a lot of people sitting quietly not asking questions, and they're not clapping either. I would like to perhaps express some of the views those people are thinking in those local halls.

Historically, Toronto has always grown and changed. I was a geography teacher and taught about Toronto's growth and change; it's always growing and it's always changing. People I know in other parts of the world — I live in North York — ask me, "Where's North York?" I live in Toronto, they understand that, "But where is North York?" Toronto has grown to take in the villages around it, and it still grows. But Toronto is less than 200 years old. It's still a very young city compared with many cities. Even when it's amalgamated at 2.3 million, it will still be quite a small city on a world scale, and so it's not the large government that a lot of people are talking about.

We've already had amalgamation, in 1954 and 1966. The boundaries are straight. They don't define communities. Communities have nothing to do with those boundaries and they won't in the future either. I really don't understand all the hysteria and talk about chaos, about changing some boundaries that are only 30 years old. We changed them 30 years ago; why can't we change them again? It's not as though all this is in stone, and it never has been throughout history. Toronto still has a lot of growing to do compared with many other major cities.

The next point I'd like to make is what I call "central places." Toronto is the central place of Ontario and it should be governed as such. The places grow according to the services provided and the markets for them. If you live in a small place, you may not have a dentist in that place, because there aren't enough people to supply enough business for that dentist, and so you have to go to the next bigger place. As services become more specialized, you find them in a more central area and the clientele is over a much wider area to support those services. So we get a hierarchy of settlements that's built up in this way, and it culminates in a central city, which for us is Toronto. We find there things like the head offices, the stock exchange, specialist hospitals, specialty stores and businesses and the major entertainments. We need a government to keep this centre attractive and vibrant and growing as Ontario's central place.

The municipalities are busy competing to attract businesses. What they're actually doing is trying to establish several central places within the city. They're attracting big buildings and development and taking it away from the downtown area. What we need is one agency to attract and help business in this city, one development office to deal with and set one set of rules and to keep the centre of Toronto and the centre for Ontario alive as a strong business centre and not have a lot of little business centres all over the place. In the present situation, why would North York or Etobicoke support development growth in the centre of the city of Toronto when they're competing for that business?

1130

The next point I'd like to make is that the changes we're talking about are not that great anyway if you want to talk about amalgamation. My tax bill says that education takes 58% of my taxes; that's the property taxes. Metro is 26% and North York is 15.6%. North York's is a minor amount of money compared with all the other property taxes I'm paying. I don't really think this is a great change. Metro is already spending twice as much as North York on the services for Toronto, so why is taking one third more into Toronto such a big change? It isn't such a big change.

Next, accountability: Because the local mayors and the local councils at present are raising taxes, they are seen as being responsible for the taxes and spending. Meanwhile, Metro and the school boards, who are spending 85% of my taxes, seem more remote and less accountable. I see that if we have a Metro government, we know who our Metro councillor is, they will be much more accountable for the money they spend on the services and maybe they will be more efficient. Evidently, the present Metro council is not that efficient, according to things I hear. I think one level of government would be more visible to the citizens and more accountable in a more direct way.

Next, the costs: There would be costs involved in amalgamation. When businesses change, they always incur costs, and they accept those costs. We have to accept costs of change too. But they do it because there are long-term benefits. I believe there will be long-term benefits in amalgamating Toronto. After all, for 15 years Mayor Lastman has said that we are overgoverned and it's ridiculous to have seven of everything. I'm not quite sure why he's changed his mind after 15 years. Anyway, many of the local councillors agree that we are overgoverned and need changes, and so having one Metro government makes sense from that point of view.

The financial statements about changes have been grossly exaggerated. Even Paul Sutherland in North York was quoted in our local Mirror over the weekend as saying that the 19%, as said by the council to be what the tax rise will be, is a gross exaggeration and is being used by the No side just to scare people. I believe that's true.

Previously the mayors all got together to make a presentation, and they came up with being able to save money on their own. Why weren't they doing it before? Why have they suddenly decided they could save money anyway? Having heard what the financial purser of the city of Toronto said, obviously we need a great deal of change about the city's finances as a whole city and not just as separate entities.

North York is very proud of its services, but when you ask people what they're proud of, they're proud of snowplowing and two garbage collections a week. Is that the most important thing in life, to get your garbage picked up twice a week? In the thing that we have from Mayor Lastman here, he mentions that the most important thing, first of all, is garbage and snowplows, as if that's the biggest thing in life.

Also, mentioning the trustees, a lot of people have said that the appointment of trustees is undemocratic. You have to have some kind of overseeing of this kind of

change. Having seen what the school trustees did as far as their severance pay is concerned, I think we need a lot of overseeing done. Also, at one of the meetings Mayor Lastman said the trustees were not interfering with North York's business because North York had nothing to hide and they could conduct their business as normal, so it was not having any impact on the local council.

I would like to see more planning with a strong central government.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mrs Piggott, may I ask you to wrap up. We've come to the end of your time allotted.

**Mrs Piggott:** Sorry. I would like to see more planning because I don't think downtown Toronto is a very attractive place. The bottom part of Yonge Street has small, poor buildings, very often dilapidated, and cheap stores. Even poor cities like Cairo and Lima in Peru have elegant cities that draw people to them, so I would like to see more planning.

North York is a typical example of disaster. Although we have a lot of new buildings, it is not a people-friendly place at all. We have a lot of new business, but the Sheppard Centre and the North York centre are disasters. Half the shops are empty. We should have had a better plan.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, I must ask you to conclude. We're well past your time.

**Mrs Piggott:** All right. I think really I've made my main points. I am in favour of it but there's one point I would like to make: that the government must continue with this process and take in the whole GTA, because only the amalgamation of Toronto is not enough.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much.

#### BRYAN BEAUCHAMP

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Bryan Beecham, please. Good morning, Mr Beecham, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Bryan Beauchamp:** Good morning, honourable members of the Ontario Legislature. My forebears are English, so "Beecham" is correct. However, since we immigrated to Canada over 100 years ago, we've returned to the original pronunciation, which is "Beauchamp."

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry.

**Mr Beauchamp:** I thought I'd just make the distinction for the record.

I've lived and worked in Toronto for the past 30 years. I've lived in north Toronto, I've lived in Rosedale, I've lived in Forest Hill and I now share a home in North York with my fiancée and six children who are present with us from time to time, some of them being away at university and so on. I'm here representing our family, and nobody else, because it's their future in this city that I am deeply concerned about.

My great-great-grandfather was a teacher of bookkeeping and writing at the Toronto Model School in 1868. I have here a bookmark from his dictionary which I inherited that says "Second Division Model School 1872." Many of you will know that the Model School was the teachers' college of its day. He taught a generation of teachers bookkeeping and writing, how to keep accounts and to communicate, and the record shows he was a very effective teacher. We know that he was

deeply committed to his profession and determined that his teachers would equip their young scholars to participate fully in the commercial life of the burgeoning, bustling city of which he was so proud.

I know he would be gratified to see his dreams for Toronto's economic success realized, for by any measure this is a prosperous, successful city; indeed an international model, praised far and wide for its excellent quality of life. But I know too that he would be contemptuous of this government's retrogressive plans for reform, however well-intentioned they may be, because he knew, along with his commonsense contemporaries, that if something isn't broken, you don't go about to fix it.

There have been many eloquent and highly-qualified people speak here and in other forums about their concerns, so there is nothing new to say. I have no new evidence to table; there are no new arguments to be made by me today. My earnest plea is that the government ignore the questionable political advice to "hit them hard, hit them fast, ignore the sacred cows, and don't blink."

1140

I ask this in the name of political decency. I ask this government to demonstrate some respect for the governed, to do more than just listen to the criticisms of its citizens. I ask this government to act upon their concerns by abandoning plans for unnecessary change.

This city is not broken, but it can be broken and very likely will be, if its economic foundations are undermined by downloading the cost of provincial social responsibilities on to municipal governments. Now is not the time, if there ever is, for the Harris government to abandon Tory compassion for the poor, the homeless, the ill and the old. As the honourable members know very well, great cities, indeed great civilizations, are marked by their treatment of the disadvantaged.

Now is the time to slow the pace of change. Now is the time to maintain the cities' financial capacity to continue to be great. Now is the time not to blink, but to see, to see that we're not broken and we don't need fixing.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. I'll ask Mr Marchese for questions.

**Mr Marchese:** Mr Beauchamp, this government acknowledges that Toronto is a great city, and when they speak of amalgamation they say they're going to make it better, that's really what they're trying to do. Do you agree with that?

**Mr Beauchamp:** I'm principally concerned that the city needs the means to make itself better, that it needs the means to continue to be great, and it won't have the means if there is this transfer of wealth that is proposed. The city has to finance expensive social programs to look after people on the margins of this city, people who come here from every nation, people who demonstrate by their presence here that we're perhaps the most tolerant and civilized and accommodating city in the world. That costs money.

If you download the costs of maintaining that quality of life for people on the margins to the municipalities and you upload the cost for education, which is basically easily predictable and forecastable and manageable, then

you've created the potential for the city to be devalued. We need to maintain the quality of life in the city, and that costs money. We need that money to flow from taxpayers who, on a progressive basis, provide the funds; not upon property taxpayers whose taxes are not based on income but rather upon assessment.

**Mr Marchese:** I agree fundamentally with that. I think it's a shameful act of this government. To take education out of property taxes, on the one hand, which in and by itself I don't disagree with, but to then download other social services that should be funded by the provincial government and not the property taxpayer is a very bad act.

I wanted to ask you another question, because a number of people said change is necessary and society is in constant evolution. I agree with that. What a number of people have said and what Golden said in her task force is that to deal with the most difficult problems of economic development, of transportation, environmental issues, regional planning and taxation issues, we need a different kind of body. She argued we need to maintain strong cities, and then take the Metro functions and the regional functions of the other areas outside of Metro and bring them together under a different type of government to deal with the issues I have mentioned.

A lot of people who have studied this agree that type of government and that type of change is perhaps a very good thing to look at. I agree with that. This government has said no to that. In fact they want to amalgamate, which doesn't solve these larger questions, and then they're going to create another service board as another level of bureaucracy to deal with the very issues that Golden identified needed to be dealt with by eliminating Metro in a sense but keeping them as part of a new governing structure to deal with the issues they were dealing with. Do you have a sense of those issues or do you take a position with respect to that?

**Mr Beauchamp:** Obviously you're saying there's room for improvement, and indeed there is. The kinds of improvements that were recommended in the Golden report and those aspects of the report that were endorsed by a former mayor, David Crombie, appear to be intelligent and progressive, but —

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, I must interrupt you. We've exceeded our time. Thank you very much for appearing here today, Mr Beauchamp.

**Mr Beauchamp:** Thank you very much for the opportunity to do so. I wish you success in your deliberations.

#### JOHN COMBS

**The Vice-Chair:** I ask for John Combs, please. Good morning and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr John Combs:** I'm John W. Combs. I've been in this city longer than anybody who's come up. I've been here since Hurricane Hazel day in 1942; that was my first day of arrival. I was executive assistant to the president of Don Mills Developments during the early development of Don Mills. I built Bayview Village centre up in the north end. I've lived in North York. I lived in Willowdale, I guess you'd call it, in Hoggs Hollow. I live downtown at 57 Charles Street, which is Charles and Bay.

I was four years president of the Village of Yorkville Association. I was five years president of the Yonge-Bloor-Bay Association, the oldest business organization of its kind in the country. I started the BIA up there, which is now the largest BIA in Canada; \$1 million is their budget. I'm vice-chair of TABIA, the Toronto Area Business Improvement Association. I'm only telling you this because I've had a lot of experience with government and politicians.

Listening here, I think what you all ought to do is make every citizen of Ontario a civil servant. Then they'd all be happy. Then you'd take all their money and pay your own taxes and it would be quite a unique place. It would be just like Russia. But that isn't the way we do things.

I'm also on the economic development committee of the city of Toronto representing small businesses and I'm on the assessment reform commission. I've been on both of these about six years, so I've been through all the tax thing.

We're talking about Bill 103 today. I'm still fathoming through Bill 106, which is quite difficult, and I'm sure we'll come up with an answer for that. But Bill 103 — I'm not really heavy any party, especially NDP. One of your NDP members was a classmate of my oldest son.

I think Mr Harris said what he was going to do before he was elected and he was elected and, damn it, he's doing something. He's the first politician in my life who's followed through on anything in a heavy way, and I give him credit for that. I don't know the man, because I don't know many people from North Bay, but he's had the guts and the fortitude to do it, and I give him credit for that.

**1150**

I've seen the area grow. I was here in 1954, as I said, when Metro really came in. I remember Big Daddy Gardiner; he was a tough son of a gun, but he was a leader and he was terrific. He was an outstanding man. I remember the amalgamation from 13 to six, and if you all take the time to go back to the newspaper files, you'll find that exactly everything being said today was said then. It's nothing new. What happened when they amalgamated? The sky didn't fall in; Chicken Little's still up there. Nothing happened. It's a tough thing to do; we know that and we've heard enough on it. The lady before me was excellent. She's been around and she looks at it from a pragmatic standpoint.

I've seen the area grow. I think the 1997-98 amalgamation will improve the overall area of Toronto. As somebody here said earlier, Toronto's only one place, right here. You can be from Scarborough, you can be from Swansea and Mimico or any other damn place, but when you go out of town you're from Toronto. This is the only way, I believe, you're going to have any major tax savings, amalgamating all these. How the heck can you say that reducing the number of jobs you'll need — that's too bad, you're going to lose some jobs, but you're going to save money. There's no other way you can reduce taxes, other than just reduce them and build a bigger debt. You've got to reduce the number of people. We're overstaffed everywhere.

I don't like negative talk all the time and that's all we've had. I've seen that buffoon John Sewell since he's been on the political stage. He's nothing but an agitator, aggravator. I've never seen John for anything. I know the family and they're just the opposite. His uncle was president and chairman of Coca-Cola and his father's a very prominent lawyer. As I recollect, I think he articled at Borden and Elliot, but I don't see him in the legal directory now. This guy is nothing but trouble everywhere. How you can be led by that — I've gone to several of the meetings; I've watched the crowd. As the evening goes, on his hands get less and less.

But I'm so tired of the negative. We've got a great future. I'm older; you look like a bunch of kids to me. As I said, Colle was my son's classmate.

By reducing seven governments to one, I defy any of you to defend how the heck that isn't going to reduce payroll costs, plus seven planning departments. I never understood from the first day I came in why there were seven fire departments. Hell, there are no lines in a fire. Why wouldn't there be one department? We did it with the police and we have a hell of a police force, the most up-to-date, modern, terrific police force, though everybody tries to knock it.

Now let's get to taxes for a minute. This is going to help us because we've got to reduce costs to reduce taxes. It doesn't go any other way. That's the simple part of it. I live in an apartment at Bay and Charles. We did a study of eight apartment buildings in the area; 25% to 40% of the rent is for real estate taxes. They are the most done-in people and they're your biggest constituency, and none of you have the guts to go out and tell them and help them. What they're paying in real estate taxes is a crime, where a condo next door pays the equivalent of a single-family residence. That's the way it's done, because I do assessment appeals, I do a lot of expert witness work, I'm an arbitrator. You're going to have to start taking care of these people in the apartments.

I'm not going to get into the tax end of it today, except we are not going to have any reduction in anything unless we reduce what it costs to run government, and I think you can do it. Look, we all know it's fraught with problems when we start out. Hell, nobody makes any change that's easy. All you people have different ideas, but it'll work out and it'll work out for the good of the people, I think.

But don't treat apartment dwellers as not here. They're a very important part of your constituency and a big one, and they're going to get bigger.

To sum up, real estate taxes are paramount in importance, and don't forget it. That's what they've got to come up with. Do you know today that the credit card debt in this country is 93% of the disposable income in this country? Just think of that. That's not mortgages, cars, clubs or anything. Ninety-three per cent of disposable income is credit card debt, so you better start worrying about people.

I represent areas of large small businesses. The numbers: With TABIA we have 25 BIAs and we represent 30,000 or 40,000 businesses in the areas; a big payroll of individual people, a lot of them family businesses. I know what they're complaining about: their taxes. I heard one

NDP man say that the Conservative government has not given out their tapes or their data to anybody to see. I can tell you the Liberal government didn't do it and the NDP government didn't do it, because we tried to get —

**Mr Marchese:** We did so.

**Mr Combs:** They did not. We didn't get the tapes in Toronto, because I was on the group in Toronto to get them. I'm just telling you. All of you have been at fault in that. You've got to give the information out if you want people to help you. The tapes were not given out.

**The Chair:** Mr Combs, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up. You're getting to the end of your allotted time.

**Mr Combs:** Changes will be possible by amalgamation and strong leadership at the local municipal levels. Everybody wants more politicians and staff, but we just can't pay for it. We've got to cut it down.

I want to thank everybody for listening to this short diatribe. I've been around a long time; I got up this morning, so I'm still involved. That's the way I look at everything. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Combs, for coming forward and making your presentation this morning.

1200

#### LIZ RYKERT

**The Chair:** Would Liz Rykert please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Liz Rykert:** Thank you. I've prepared my notes, and I understand they've just been circulated to you. As a citizen, I'm here to speak to the members of this committee on what I believe to be a mistake on the part of the government. I'm not going to speak to all the things I think are wrong with Bill 103. I believe the 279 presenters, prior to those who presented today, who have opposed the bill have said just about everything there is to say about why this bill is not good for our communities. Instead, I am here to urge you to stop this bill now and return to what we know to be a reasonable and reliable way to reform local government.

I have lived in Toronto my whole life. I grew up here, went to university here and am now employed here. I have contributed hundreds of volunteer hours as an active member of vital communities where I live and work. In all my efforts, both volunteer and employed, I have focused on finding meaningful ways for citizens to seek involvement and build local ownership for change. Local ownership means people are highly motivated to sustain change over time.

Bill 103 and the process by which it is being introduced and is proposed to be enacted removes local control and ownership from the people. As a citizen, this offends me. In a democracy I do not expect to have every policy reflect my own views. I do expect, however, to have the opportunity to have a fair and reasonable debate, to be considered seriously and respected, and to be heard. Parliamentary democracy is not a simple platform to follow. It is a process with rules and tradition.

Bill 103 leaves me unable to exercise my democratic right to control the people who will make profound changes to the structures of what we currently know as

Metro Toronto and the six local municipalities. We the people and you the government are not separate entities. We are all one society faced with upholding the laws we as a society have chosen to govern ourselves. How a government which is accountable to the people can make such an acidic assault on what we know as basic democratic principles remains a mystery to me. Perhaps you know deep down that together we must struggle for the right way, which may not necessarily mean the least expensive way. I want to believe this. I hope you will seek inside yourselves for the truth which you know lies clearly before you. No publicly elected representative fears the truth.

As the manager of the electronic strategy for Citizens for Local Democracy, it has been interesting to see politicians, both inside Metro and in the province at large, from all levels of government, join the raging debate online, contribute to the expanding public record and participate fully without fear of retribution. Why? Because they speak the truth. To capture the statements of our elected Tory representatives and hold them up for what they are — full of falsehood and personal bias and completely lacking in expert concurrence — means the electorate has a venue from which to make up their own minds, to contribute their own experiences and to work together to find mutually agreeable solutions.

The contempt displayed by this government for the intelligence of its electorate will no doubt come to haunt it. Our online record will be standing by in the years to come to bring transparency to your actions. No amount of glitzy advertising will deflect what the people will see and know to be reality. Your power base is shifting. The truth in a democracy does not need defending.

Online venues are recognized for their capacity to build transparency into social process. With transparency comes public accountability, and it is these two attributes which support citizens to build trusting and meaningful partnerships toward positive change and renewed hope for the future.

This government has used the internet, television, radio, and print media to engage in a very one-sided dialogue with the people to whom it is accountable. Although you have the capacity to create online forums for debate, you have not. You have had the opportunity to join the online forums created by the citizens, but you have not joined these either. You rely on projecting a message, not on engaging in dialogue. In recent meetings meant for dialogue your MPPs were deluged with criticism by the general public.

It was interesting to note, as the government was found in contempt of Parliament for its advertising flyer on One Toronto, that there was quick work to remove the web pages from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. We have copies of all the pages which stood there until the contempt charges were announced. Those of us in the online world could identify your speedy backtracking. Nowhere on your pages are the reasons why Toronto would function better as a megacity. The truth continues to speak for itself.

This government's adoption of new management techniques based on chaos and complexity are not beyond predictable results. I know and use these techniques

regularly in my work to build sustaining, vital, self-organizing structures in communities and online to enhance these activities in communities. These approaches count on distributed-capacity building and shared local ownership. They are based on an approach which believes if we link expert knowledge with community wisdom we will all benefit.

I am troubled by this government's one-sided use of the paradigm. The purpose of viewing the world through the lens of complexity is to see with greater insight the natural patterns of connectivity and interdependence in communities, to encourage these patterns, to strengthen meaningful relationships and to seek the solutions which are based on local control. While the use of chaotic change has been imposed through tactics such as mega-week, the respect of the process is stymied with the imposition of rigid solutions based on centralized control.

I suggest to you your approach has backfired. Your use of chaotic provocation has resulted in the revealing of your government's lack of reliable data, underdeveloped plans for transition and the inadequate nature of the proposed solutions. Instead we have seen the emergence of new and healthy alliances, emerging collective understandings of your thin analysis, and profound awakening of the democratic spirit of participation. For this result, I thank you. Never before have I seen such interest in local political process, nor such passion in understanding the need for finding honest, accountable and defensible solutions to renewed local governing structures.

You have a choice here. You could withdraw your proposed solutions. You could create a well-thought-out process which is publicly accountable and adaptable to emerging recommendations and use the power of public participation you have created by your announcements.

As one citizen, Rob Degoeij, told these hearings: "When a government does something so abhorrently wrong, even the most apathetic citizen will speak up."

I also know that as an organization assumes an increasingly rigid structure of control it becomes more vulnerable to destruction.

Truth is not absolute. The online venues, just like well-designed public participation venues in our communities, allow for the evolving nature of dialogue and discussion. Through these forums for discussion and debate we learn from one another and we change our minds based on the evolution of knowledge from the information and experience shared among citizens.

You have an opportunity now, right here, to consider the careful advice of hundreds of citizens and to relook at the measures contained in Bill 103 that deny your electorate their democratic rights. You have the opportunity to stop this bill here in committee. Your timetable is quickly running out. There is no compelling reason to carry on in the face of the ridicule waged at the members of this government. There is time to stop, to rethink, to redraft, and to be inclusive of the ideas brought forward by citizens. You could choose to capture the public interest in your proposed reforms, to work with the people to create reforms that are acceptable and accountable.

The Who Does What panel was an exercise between governments. Citizen participation was absent.

Mae Harman asked in her deputation last Wednesday: "What machine is driving this big rush to make such drastic changes to our governance? If you have a detailed, thought-out plan, why is it such a secret?"

Jane Jacobs noted at a public meeting organized by Citizens for Local Democracy on Feb 17, 1997: "The only remedy for the bills is to discard them, to toss them out. It is not possible to fix them. They are unimprovable. We must see that they are disposed of, and then, in an open, sensible, democratic public debate, begin looking at what should be done and to do it gently."

I implore you, follow the advice of Ms Jacobs. Kill Bill 103, and now. Create an open public process to gently change our local municipal structures in a way which preserves their current strengths, which is inclusive of the people's interests and which respects democratic principals and public accountability.

**The Chair:** You've exhausted your allotted time, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this morning.

1210

#### ANTHONY PITELLI

**The Chair:** Would Mr Anthony Pitelli come forward, please. Good morning, Mr Pitelli. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Anthony Pitelli:** Good morning; it's actually afternoon now. Let me begin by thanking the committee for allowing me the opportunity to speak here today. I have lived in Toronto all my life and I too love my city. I'll begin by saying that a little government and a little luck are necessary in this life, but only a fool would trust either one of them. We should rely on personal responsibility and promote private liberty. I am in favour of Bill 103. We are overgoverned. Everybody knows that, except the opposition here today.

The mystery of government is not only how it works but how do we make it stop? When can we stop passing laws and raising taxes? There is too much government and it is too costly. In so far as Bill 103 makes for less government, fewer politicians, and fewer bureaucrats, I believe it goes in the right direction.

The closed-minded opponents to amalgamation would have us live in the past and refuse to learn from it. We are drowning in a sea of red tape, regulation and bureaucratic bungling. They spend our hard-earned tax dollars on dubious programs and special interest groups like drunken sailors in an attempt to perpetrate their own self-serving empires. Easy and obvious evidence of this is the so-called referendum, which we consider a sham on which the mayors are spending millions of tax dollars. It makes me wonder what the mayors were doing before fighting amalgamation became their full-time job.

Is this democracy? The mayors decided on the question. They are administering the process. They are actively promoting and funding one side of the issue, which I find particularly deplorable, as I on the other side and people like me are not even allowed to ask for funding. We are told, "Don't even apply." That button on Mr Rosario Marchese's jacket was probably paid for by them.

They are in charge of counting the ballots. Is this democracy? It's a farce, and it's a costly farce. There are stories of ballots being found in garbage cans, ballots being sent to children and dead people. People in Scarborough are afraid to send their ballots in because they have to sign their names. Imagine someone being afraid to vote because the garbage man might not pick up his garbage. It's a joke. All this, and they couldn't even agree on how the referendum would work; we have different referendums in each city.

The opposition to amalgamation has dire warnings for all of us: "Your freedoms will be gone. Your taxes will go up. The sky will fall. Your hair will fall out. The world as we know it will end." The simple truth is that the Metro level already supplies 72% of services and amalgamation only and reasonably adds the remaining 28%. Together with the elimination of duplication and unnecessary politicians and bureaucrats, this move seems very logical to me.

Even the mayors can agree on the fact that we need change. The status quo and those who would have us continue with it seem to be mired in an ideology based on the opposite of being productive. "Wait," they say. "Don't move so fast. Let's do more studies. Let's write more reports. Let's waste more time and of course let's spend more money." These people are on bureaucratic time, which is slower than geological time. Let's wait until the next ice age and maybe the problem will go away, and of course their pensions might kick in at the same time.

To the professional agitators and pesters who have paraded in front of this committee, I say that good government is hard and the Mike Harris government is on the right track in turning us on the path of respect for the moneys unhappily relinquished by the tired and weary working taxpayer. Remember, there is only one taxpayer and he's fed up. You've plucked the golden goose and he's tired of being plucked.

Property taxes in Toronto went up by 50% from 1986 to 1992, and 60% from 1986 to 1996. I would be very careful about the warnings from the mayors who warn you your taxes will go up who have been doing it all along.

The Harris government was elected to be tax-cutters and streamliners and is so far doing a good job. They are doing what they said they would during the campaign. Why should this change? Where was the outcry from the mayors when Mr Harris kept his promise by cutting his own pay, when he reduced the provincial Legislature from 131 seats to 99 and put a swift and final end to the ridiculously generous pensions past MPPs had voted for themselves? It was astonishing to me to see that the mayors, when faced with the prospect of losing their power and their prestige, could happily and magically meet in joyful collusion and swiftly find the \$240 million in tax savings when overburdened property taxpayers have been begging for relief for many years.

Self-preservation must be a mighty tool, for it seems to have made cost-cutting geniuses of all of them and forced them to admit that what the Mike Harris government has been saying all along about the waste and duplication was right.

But of course the mayors and their hangers-on know better than we do. It's always about money — about somebody else's money. While the Harris government is cutting taxes and streamlining, we have the spectre of a city administrator in Etobicoke being rewarded with a \$76,000-a-year pension for spending thousands of tax dollars in strip joints and golf clubs. Quite a system, and all quite tidy and normal according to the councillors in that city.

Remember this about waste, spending, grants to special interest groups and all the so-called services we are so fortunate to receive: When somebody gets something for nothing, somebody else is getting nothing for something. It is the taxpayers, who are continuously paying more and more in a quicksand of taxation only to see this money so easily squandered, who realize it is time for a change. Many of our services are well worth saving, but things need to be much more accountable.

From some of the speakers representing their views here, one might think the present situation is a wonderful Shangri-La, with the different cities cooperating like brothers and sisters and bliss all around. But things are not right and we know this is not true. We need and demand change. The different cities are constantly bickering and competing with one another to the detriment of all. Each has a quagmire of different rules, regulations and bylaws punishing business and stifling investment.

We have out-of-control school boards, which spend money so wildly and so foolishly there must be a spot reserved for them in the Guinness Book of Records; and school trustees, who are highly overpaid and who seem to be anonymous even to the taxpayers they are supposed to represent. For years the mayors have complained about rocketing education costs and, since this represents approximately 6% of their budgets, they have always used that as an excuse for raising taxes. Now they complain about the downloading.

What about the uploading? The provincial government will be taking control of this education spending. This represents \$5.4 billion off the property tax bill. They mayors should be thanking Mr Harris for relieving them of this burden, and taxpayers should be glad of this change as the Harris government has promised to gain control over the spending. The cities and school boards have failed to do the job by being unwilling or unable to accept responsibility for it.

Over the last decade enrolment in schools has risen 16%, inflation has risen 40%, but school board spending has shot up 82% and the education portion of our property taxes has increased by a whopping 120%. These figures are scary enough but could be swallowed by parents and hardworking taxpayers if we were turning out better-educated and more-qualified students, but we know this is not the case. In fact, standards haven't even kept pace. Where are they spending this money? Certainly not in the classroom. We are paying more and more and falling further behind. I would ask anyone on the panel here today to explain this to me.

Under the provincial plan, school boards will reduce from 129 to 66. The number of trustees will be reduced from 1,900 down to 700, and their salaries in Toronto will be reduced from \$49,000 to \$5,000 a year. It's about

time. It's about time somebody stepped in to fix this situation, and Mr Harris should be commended for it.

The mayors and their cronies seem to think that more government is always the answer. "Government can and will solve all your problems," they say, "especially municipal government." It's easy to understand why they would say this. They are the government, and they are well paid and well perked. Mr Harris, on the other hand, understands, as most of us working people do, that today government is the problem, invading every aspect of our lives. It is inefficient and wasteful.

This can be seen from a quote from one of the mayors when he understood amalgamation would happen. "Let's spend everything that's not nailed down," was his reply. That's easy for him to say; it's not their money; they didn't sweat for it. This is why we need trustees and a transition team, as stated in Bill 103, to oversee this arrogant disregard for the taxpayers' money.

Apathy runs wild in the electorate. We have 20% to 30% turnouts, as they see government after government at all levels lie to them, break promises and continuously live beyond their means.

**The Chair:** I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up. You're coming to the end of your allotted time.

**Mr Pitelli:** One friend of mine was quoting a common feeling about politicians in general: "Why bother? They're all liars and crooks anyway." My reply to him was simple: If you really believe that, and many people do, isn't it at least better to pay only 45 of them rather than the present 106, as it stands now?

The mayors and opponents are shortsighted and using scare tactics is the only weapon they have. They are not afraid that Mr Harris is wrong; they are deathly afraid that Mr Harris is right.

Toronto is a great city and I'm glad to live here. It is a city of caring people and lovely neighbourhoods. I feel a bond with mine, as all others feel about theirs. This will not change with amalgamation. The proposals in Bill 103 will not change that. I care about my city and my community and I hope to leave it a better place. I wish that Mr Harris will follow through to make Toronto and Ontario the best place in the world to live. As it is now, it's the most heavily taxed place in the world to live.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Pitelli, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

*The committee recessed from 1220 to 1535.*

#### NORTH YORK FIGHTS BACK!

**The Chair:** Good afternoon. Would Robert Richardson and Helen Kennedy please come forward. Welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes this afternoon to make your presentation.

**Mr Robert Richardson:** Good afternoon and thank you for this opportunity to speak to you. We speak to you today on behalf of North York Fights Back!, a coalition of community groups, labour unions, social agencies, faith networks and individuals who came together in May 1996 as a result of seeing the devastating impact of the so-called Common Sense Revolution.

The increase in poverty, hunger and homelessness touched many of us personally and compelled us to join forces to fight the attack on the most vulnerable in our community, especially women and children, new Canadians, minority families, the poor, unemployed, seniors and people with disabilities. We organized a historic rally during the Metro Days of Action in which more than 5,000 people from communities across North York marched down Yonge Street to protest the devastating results of the Harris cuts.

Over the past two months, we have been organizing across North York to fight the megacity, mega-board and downloading of social services on to the municipalities. We recognize that Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, is but one legislative tool that, coupled with Bill 104, the Fewer School Boards Act, and the downloading of funding for social services to the municipalities, will result in the further victimization of the most marginalized in our community and will benefit only the most wealthy.

The provincial government has made it clear from the beginning of their term whose interests they represent. They cut welfare rates, attacked workers' rights and then attacked labour; they dismantled employment equity and laid off thousands of public sector employees. They plan to close hospitals and privatize public agencies. You don't have to look far to see how Bill 103 and the downloading continue this attack on the poor and working people of this province. Bill 103 sets in place a structure that minimizes citizen involvement, maximizes corporate interests and further widens the gap between the rich and the poor.

Bill 103 reduces citizen involvement in the democratic process of government. The Common Sense Revolution did not mention forcing the amalgamation of Metro Toronto. In fact, both Mike Harris and Al Leach were on record as opposed to municipal megacities. It's no wonder people were shocked by Bill 103, shocked that it went against any intelligent recommendations that have been made over the past 10 years, shocked that the citizens would not be consulted before the bill was drafted, and shocked that 2.3 million people could be so utterly disregarded in what was supposed to be a democracy.

This government stated unequivocally that they do not need to listen to the thousands and thousands of people who are opposed to the forced amalgamation of Toronto. When asked if he would honour the results of the referendum on March 3, Al Leach, in one of the most arrogant statements ever made by a government minister, said, "Uh, let me think about that. No."

The appointment of trustees and the transition team exemplifies how this government wants to shut the door on citizen involvement. Even though we did not elect them, trustees and the transition team can usurp the powers of elected municipal politicians. Bill 103 renders them immune from accountability. In fact, the trustees and the transition team cannot be held accountable for any actions they may take, no matter how damaging the consequences of their actions may be.

**Helen Kennedy:** What role does this government want a citizen to play in the new city of Toronto? It's been said that the Tories are governing Ontario like they would a corporation. Mike Harris and this Tory government are

acting like they are the corporate board of directors of this province. They are intent on running Queen's Park like Matthew Barrett runs the Bank of Montreal. Citizens become annoying things that you have to put up with from time to time, but they're really only "special interest groups."

Bill 103 imposes a structure that makes citizen involvement more remote. A municipal politician will not be focused on local issues, but on the mega-problems associated with a mega-bureaucracy. Bill 103 will replace our democratically elected municipal council, in part by appointed neighbourhood committees. Of course, you'd have to be the "right" kind of citizen — pun intended — to get appointed. Citizens who are concerned about social justice will have as much chance of being appointed to the neighbourhood committee as they would of being appointed to the board of directors of the Bank of Montreal.

The amalgamation and downloading agenda of this government sets the stage for massive contracting-out and privatization of public services. Premier Harris has confirmed that there will be jobs lost as a result of the amalgamation. What jobs survive will be under intense pressure to be contracted out and/or privatized. Full-time, secure public sector jobs will be replaced by part-time, minimum wage contract jobs.

We'd like to let this government know that decent jobs with decent wages and benefits are essential ingredients for the health of our community. Jobs mean food, clothing, shelter and post-secondary education. Jobs mean parents can provide for their children, pay for school trips, feel good about their contribution to society. Jobs mean the survival of our community. Without these jobs, our neighbours suffer and our community suffers.

North York Fights Back! is committed to the fight for fully funded, quality public services in our community. We do not support the downloading of public services to private interests. Bill 103 and the downloading legislation that is pending will lead to the commodification of human services for the children, the youth and the seniors in our community. Those most vulnerable, people who are sick and people with disabilities, will suffer the most.

The effect of transferring the care of people to private interests devalues the people who most deserve our care: our parents, our children and youth. To profit from delivery of human services, one needs to cut salaries, cut care, cut food, cut staff, or cut training. Community members cannot be used as commodities to fatten the wallets of local businesses.

**The Chair:** Excuse me. I have to allow members an opportunity for three minutes to go vote. At the end of the paragraph, we can maybe stop and we'll come back in a few minutes. I apologize for the interruption. We'll recess until after the vote.

*The committee recessed from 1541 to 1603.*

**The Chair:** Welcome back. Ms Kennedy, if you could carry on with the presentation.

**Helen Kennedy:** I understand I now have 15 more minutes, right?

**The Chair:** Not quite.

**Helen Kennedy:** The debate both for and against the megacity has been waged on the basis of whether you

believe property taxes will decrease by 10% or increase by 20% to 30%. This debate is flawed, though, because it does not recognize the essential role the government should play in the provision of social services, nor does it acknowledge the regressive nature of the property tax system. Human services like welfare, housing, child care and health care should not be funded through the property tax system. In fact, North York Fights Back! believes we should work towards phasing out the regressive property tax system in favour of progressive tax reform based on ability to pay.

We also want to let you know that our experience is that the fight back is growing at a phenomenal pace across Metro Toronto. Thousands and thousands of people are getting involved in the fight back against this Bill 103 and the downloading. I want to draw your attention to some of these groups outside the city of Toronto who are building solid opposition to the corporate-centred policies of this provincial government. Last week this committee heard a presentation from York Fights Back, this morning you heard from the East York Action Committee, and tonight you'll hear from Etobicoke Takes a Stand. A new group has just formed in Scarborough called Save Our Scarborough. All of these groups are community/labour coalitions who are standing up in communities across Metro to fight back against the corporate interests that are running this province.

North York Fights Back! wants to add our voice to the growing thousands of people in Metro and across this province who are organizing, educating and resisting and who are united in opposition to Bill 103. We need fully funded quality public services and full employment in our communities. We are committed to building communities based on civic responsibility and fulfilling collective needs.

**Mr Richardson:** While Bill 103 is from both sides being fought on the basis of the cost to the taxpayer, it is our contention that you can't place a cost on civic community responsibility. We must look at which structures best support citizens in need. The creation of a megacity, as proposed in Bill 103, is not it.

**Mrs Munro:** Thank you very much for being here today. I wondered if you'd comment on an idea that has come to us through these hearings in that many people have come before us and told us that the status quo, the way in which Toronto is organized right now, is not appropriate. I just wondered if you could tell us what your response to the whole issue of the status quo is.

**Helen Kennedy:** We're not opposed to change. We want to make that very clear. There are certainly issues within the greater Toronto area that need to be addressed. I think what we would support is a consultative process that looks at the inequities across the GTA and looks at the structures that would be most beneficial to building communities that are based on quality services and public services and job creation.

**Mrs Munro:** By that, are you suggesting then that you are in favour of the kind of two-tiered system we have right now with the cities and Metro council? Do you support the organization as it currently exists?

**Mr Richardson:** I think that in looking at that particular question, we don't necessarily support the organiza-

tion as it exists today, and we have looked at other models such as the creation of a greater Toronto area council, which may or may not have elected representatives on it, but maintaining a strong local governance and a size that is reasonable and which can be controlled by the communities it serves.

I think also that what's key in terms of looking at structural change is looking at removing the regressive nature of the tax base within the municipalities of Ontario, and going into Bill 104 and the so-called money bills that will be coming down after it, when you're looking at removing education from the property tax base, I think that's a good first step. However, the subsequent downloading of social services to the municipal tax base is pushing us two steps backwards.

**Mrs Munro:** You mention that you would support some kind of structural change that would allow the recognition of communities, and at the same time you certainly recognize too the need for some kind of GTA organization, whatever form that takes. I'm just wondering how you see this being balanced in terms of community representation. The minister has talked about each of the councillors being part of a community group — that is, an elected community group — so obviously their mandate would be to look at those very specific local community issues. Do you see that as a group that then could represent you in the larger Toronto context?

**Helen Kennedy:** The problem with the community councils, I think they're called in the bill, is that it would reduce the representation to one councillor for 50,000 people, which is about the size of — Prince Edward Island? North Bay. One of those things. What it does is take away the accessibility of that local councillor.

I think the other issue is that you recognized the need for neighbourhood committees, but you made those appointed committees. If you need neighbourhood committees, we have those now; they're called local councils.

1610

**Mrs Munro:** I want to make a distinction here between the elected councillor, who is part of that community group, as opposed to neighbourhood, which is the volunteer structure you're talking about.

I want to go back to this issue. You talk about the accessibility and the fear you have that 45 people will not be sufficient to represent your views. My question then is, if we recognize the need to have some kind of GTA coordination, how many people do you think the whole area should have, given the issue of accessibility?

**Helen Kennedy:** I don't think we're talking about numbers of people; we're talking about coordination. How can you elect a local councillor to a local government and then on top of that coordinate the services across the GTA? Bill 103 doesn't even address that kind of coordination; it just deals with inside Metro Toronto.

**Mrs Munro:** I understand that. My question really comes from the fact that you've identified, as many people have, the need to have Toronto in the context of a GTA because we're looking at how Toronto can best be represented in that bigger context. That's why I asked you the question in terms of the status quo, the kind of governance structure we have now, or whether you

support moving to something such as the community of 45 people.

**Helen Kennedy:** The other problem with the council of 45 people is that we know what that means. We are an active group in North York, and the city of Toronto, for example, has had a lot of community activists for many years. The result is that they have a lot more input on their council. In North York, if you go to 1 to 50,000 as the representative number, we know it's going to be the party machines that come in. It will be not where community activists go to represent the people in their community; it will be where the parties come in and have their candidates running because the cost will be prohibitive for people to run. I'm sure that's what you all want, but that's not what the people want. That's very clearly the message we're getting from our community.

**The Chair:** We've come to the end of the time. Thank you both for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION, LOCAL 113

**The Chair:** Would Art Patrick please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Patrick, and welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes to make a presentation.

**Mr Art Patrick:** Members of the committee, thank you for allowing us to appear here. We wish the same sort of thing had taken place on some of the other bills earlier in the session.

Local 113 of the Amalgamated Transit Union represents a large majority of the people who operate Toronto's public transit system, which is the second-largest system in North America, behind New York's. It is also one of the safest public transit systems anywhere except for the one tragic subway accident two years ago, which I will return to in a few minutes. The TTC has always been known for its remarkable passenger safety record. I hope you will allow ATU members to take their rightful credit for this achievement. After all, we operate and maintain the vehicles, albeit within the rules and budgets established by management.

We have been around as a local union for nearly 100 years, so we have witnessed a century of evolution in public transit in Metro Toronto. No one, and we mean no one, knows more than we do about the realities of public transportation in Metro Toronto and the transit needs of its residents, and we have some deep concerns about the potential effects of Bill 103 on Toronto's transit system.

Our first concern is with a glaring omission in Bill 103. Unlike section 7 of the current Metro act, there is no section in Bill 103 that establishes the TTC as Toronto's transit authority, separate and apart from the council. As this bill now reads, the TTC would become a mere department of municipal government. You have made exceptions for Toronto Hydro and the police services board — sections 6 and 7 of Bill 103 say these agencies will remain separate from the council — but there is no exception for the TTC.

In the case of our electricity systems and police services, there are good and obvious reasons for keeping them at arm's length from the municipal government: These vital services must be above politics as much as

humanly possible; they should not be subject to deal-making, vote-trading and buck-passing; and they must of course be publicly accountable in the fullest sense but at the same time be non-political. But these same reasons also apply to public transit, which is why the Toronto Transit Commission was established in the first place. Transit planning and service decisions should not be dictated by the most vocal constituents or the most persistent politicians.

There is irrefutable evidence that the traditional separation of Metro's public transit services from the uncertainties of daily government has always been right up to the present day; it works extremely well. The TTC is the most economically efficient urban transit system in North America, public or private. Direct customer revenues pay almost 80% of the system's costs, the highest ratio of revenue-to-costs on the continent. Our total cost per rider, at \$1.87, is not quite the lowest. Montreal beats us by a penny. Their cost per rider is \$1.86, but Montreal's subsidy per rider is 95 cents, which is more than twice Toronto's at 43 cents.

There are many other facts and statistics to support the claim that whatever its shortcomings may be, the TTC is one of the world's safest and most efficient public transit systems, the guardian of nearly \$10 billion in public assets paid for over the years by the people of Metro Toronto, with a lot of help from the rest of the province as well. The government is very unwise to be toying with something that is already working so well, especially a public service whose efficiency and reliable operation is critical to the region's economic health and the prosperity of the whole province.

The omission of a separate public agency for transit in Bill 103 is either an oversight on the part of the government or it is deliberate. If it is an oversight, it should be corrected without delay. We already went through this debate in 1992 when some Metro councillors proposed making the TTC a department of Metro. They were unsuccessful because this idea was wrong then and it's still wrong now. But don't take my word for it; listen to what Municipal Affairs Minister Al Leach said at the time on this issue, when he was the TTC's chief general manager. I'm quoting the October 3, 1992, Toronto Star article which is attached to our presentation:

"'Being a department of Metro is simply not in the best interests of transit or the employees,' he said.... Leach said it might be more suitable for the TTC to take over Metro. 'We're bigger, and our managers could probably handle Metro on the side while they're resting.' He said past studies have always concluded that it's wise to keep transit management one step removed from the pressures of day-to-day politics."

Al Leach was dead-on when he said that, and we cannot think of anything that has essentially changed in the last four years that would cause him to change his mind on this issue. In fact, he probably still believes what he said back then, and I urge you to ask him if he does. If I'm wrong and he says he no longer believes what he said in 1992, maybe he's come down with the same mysterious disease as the Premier, who says he no longer believes what he told the people of Fergus in 1994 when

he spoke out against the same idea of municipal amalgamation that he is now imposing on Toronto.

If, however, this omission in Bill 103 was deliberate, we can only conclude that the reason is to make it easy to privatize and deregulate public transit in Toronto. I don't want to believe this interpretation, but it is consistent with the government's downloading of all public transit costs to municipal governments. By creating intolerable pressures on transit funding and by giving Toronto council direct control over the public transit system, privatization will be made easier and more attractive to politicians, who will not want to be blamed for the inevitable rise in costs and service cuts that will result from the withdrawal of provincial government support for the TTC. As bad as this impact will be on the TTC, it will be even worse everywhere else in the province. Cities like Hamilton, London and Thunder Bay, to name just three, will be very severely impacted and their transit systems will deteriorate faster than Toronto's, whether they are eventually privatized or not.

If encouraging the privatization of public transit is the hidden meaning of this omission in Bill 103, which we think it is, the government will be making a huge mistake for which it will be cursed by everyone in the future, with the exception of those few who end up making fortunes in the private transit business.

#### 1620

To use a phrase that Conservatives are fond of, there is no free lunch when it comes to safe, reliable public transit. You really do get what you pay for. The more you squeeze money out of the transit system, the less safe it becomes. Complex machinery and systems require a great deal of maintenance. There is simply no way around this. Even the Conservative government cannot defeat the laws of nature through privatization and deregulation. If you don't spend the time and money on maintenance, things break down, no matter how efficient you may be otherwise.

To vividly illustrate this point, let me return to the tragic subway crash of 1995. It was big news when it happened. Many people didn't remember that it was finally established by an exhaustive inquiry that this crash was the direct result of cuts in funding that led to the decrease in inspections and reduced maintenance standards. Yes, there was a degree of human error involved, but the inquiry concluded that if proper maintenance had been done the crash would not have happened, people would not have died and the TTC would not have spent millions in compensation, repairs and legal costs. If there was a false economy, this was it.

Maintenance is not an interesting topic to most people and probably doesn't win many votes, so politicians tend to ignore it as an issue. Yet when it comes to public safety it is the issue. Look at all the tires flying off all the trucks these days. Is there a connection between unsafe trucks and the deregulation of the trucking industry a few years back? Of course there is, and to deny this would be pointless. When the survival and profitability of a newly privatized business depends on keeping costs down, maintenance and environmental considerations are the first costs to be sacrificed. Many observers of the trucking industry have pointed this out and blame deregula-

lation for the incredible jump in trucking accidents over the last 10 years.

You can see why people are uneasy when it looks like the government is planning to deregulate transit. You have already deregulated inter-regional bus service, as of 1998, so I can predict with sadness that we will be reading about an unusual increase in bus crashes on the highways starting early in the next decade. There is still time to back out of this mistake, but if you won't, please don't make this same grave error with municipal transit.

Apart from safety, deregulation and privatization of transit will also result in reduction or elimination of service on unprofitable routes. The people who live on these routes will have no other choice but to travel in their cars. Ironically, those who now travel in their cars and do not take the TTC will be the biggest losers. If service deterioration and fare increases cause just 10% of those who now take the TTC to turn to the car, the number of cars on Toronto's streets, in addition to the ones already there every weekday, would stretch from Queen's Park down University Avenue on to the Gardiner, on to the Queen Elizabeth Way, through Oakville, Hamilton, St Catharines and Niagara Falls, over the Rainbow Bridge and into downtown Buffalo. It's simply not possible to accommodate that many more cars in this city. There are not enough roads and not nearly enough parking. The traffic jams would be intolerable and the increase in pollution would be sickening.

A less desirable transit system would also have a very negative impact on tourism, which is one of Toronto's best industries. The new trade centre will suffer and the quality of life generally would diminish as more cars choke our highways and neighbourhoods.

Yet this is where your policies are leading. By downloading the entire cost of public transit to municipalities, you are making higher fares, less service, poorer maintenance and fewer riders inevitable. This is precisely why all other industrial countries, including the United States, fund public transit from all three levels of government. On this issue, the government of Ontario is completely out of step with the entire rest of the world, which seems to understand the economic and environmental importance of public transit.

I now want to turn to the issue of Toronto's amalgamation and its potential effect on transit service. You may think the ATU should have no problem with amalgamation because we operate a single Metro-wide system, not a collection of smaller systems. Ironically, public transit privatization could easily result in a patchwork system of transit providers that becomes very complex to manage efficiently, as has happened in London, England. We all know about London, England. Just because some services there are better provided centrally, that doesn't mean smaller governments are not useful when it comes to those services.

In the case of public transit in Toronto, our union often sees what a difference local government can make. The most noticeable effect is the interest local councillors take in transit issues that affect their constituents, even though it is Metro council's formal jurisdiction. The fact is, Metro councillors do not have the time to deal adequately with service issues that constantly arise in a region as

large and spread out as Metro. Because of this, local councillors often attend TTC meetings with ratepayers to make presentations for service adjustments, such as new stops in underserviced neighbourhoods, community buses and other issues. Moreover, it was an alliance of local city councils that successfully opposed the TTC's becoming an operational department of Metro in 1992. They, like we, saw the dangers of politicizing public transit.

In summary, Bill 103, combined with the downloading of all transit funding to municipalities, will inevitably lead to a deterioration of public transit in Toronto. We defy the government to show how this would not happen. Let me repeat that there is no free lunch when it comes to safe, reliable, quality transit that people will support and use. The government must pay attention to what the rest of the world is doing to promote public transit and not end up destroying, by neglect and underfunding, what is widely acknowledged to be one of the finest urban transit systems in the world.

If the three horsemen of Metro's apocalypse — Harris, Johnson and Eves — persist in ignoring the voice of the people, they'll end up with a political party like the one left by fellow Tory Brian Mulroney, whose own schemes for privatization, deregulation and downloading of funding were disastrous political experiments from which we may never fully recover.

Take a transfer and turn back while you can. We are certainly not in favour of Bill 103 in the format it's currently in.

Can I just make one comment as a citizen of North York?

**The Chair:** Surely.

**Mr Patrick:** When it is incorporated, if this goes through, and it seems it's going to be steamrolled through, hopefully there will be enough resistance that the government will listen.

I've lived in North York for 33 years; own my home. Let me tell you something: I don't mind paying an extra dollar or two in North York for the services we get. As I see it, amalgamation of these cities is going to take my right away to have twice-a-week garbage collections and summer pickups on Wednesdays for trash. That's just one small point. Hydro, for instance, is cheaper in North York. If we're going to be amalgamated, we could end up sharing the burden of the costs of older systems such as Toronto proper. Each location has to remain as an independent government for the purposes of the citizens who have supported their own local councils over the years.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Patrick, for coming forward and making your presentation today. You've exhausted your allotted time, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee.

#### PETER PROSZANSKI

**The Chair:** Peter Proszanski, please. Good afternoon, sir. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes to make your presentation.

**Mr Peter Proszanski:** I am Peter Proszanski, and I'm appearing before you as a citizen of the city of Scarborough and as a resident of the community of West Hill.

I'm attending the hearings today to bring forth my personal point of view and to advise the committee why I feel it is time to proceed with amalgamation. I'll briefly touch upon some of the reasons I feel the creation of one municipality for the Metropolitan Toronto area is a positive move. I'll also briefly discuss what is occurring in my community, that being the city of Scarborough, with respect to the manner in which our referendum, or public opinion poll, is being undertaken.

With respect to the unification of Metropolitan Toronto into one city, it would seem to me that there are many reasons for so doing. As I understand it, under our current system of local government, many of the services that are currently being provided to the residents of Metropolitan Toronto are being delivered by the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto or our regional government. Services such as transportation, police, water and sewer treatment, ambulance and welfare fall under the responsibility of the current Metropolitan government.

1630

I note that the Toronto Star in its editorial of February 22 indicated that 72% of the services delivered to us are delivered by the Metro government. This of course makes you wonder why the remaining 28% of services cannot be provided to us by a single governmental entity. The editorial in the Toronto Star clearly and succinctly provided compelling reasons, in my opinion, for the amalgamation of Toronto, East York, York, Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough into one government.

The other reason I feel amalgamation should be supported is that it will have, or should have, the effect of saving the beleaguered taxpayers tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars. I would anticipate that some of these savings would be realized from the avoidance of duplication in the delivery of services and the more cost-effective delivery of such services. Let there be no doubt that by unifying our city there will be numerous costs. However, there will also be cost savings that I feel will strongly outweigh the costs at least in the medium if not the short term.

Also, by unifying Metropolitan Toronto, we should have more efficient government and more uniform regulations with one bureaucracy applying the same rules across the board. Uniform administration and regulation can only better serve the citizenry and make Toronto more appealing for investment.

The benefits of further savings that are realized from the efficiencies of restructuring government should be realized quickly. This is exactly what has transpired in the private sector over the last several years. Many companies have been forced to restructure their operations to ensure their survival. In effect, it has just taken our governments a little longer to realize the importance of operating efficiently.

It is fair to say that even the mayors of the cities that make up Metropolitan Toronto acknowledge that the system needs to be fixed. Although the proposals to proceed with a new city of Toronto may not please everybody, it is certainly undeniable that it is high time a change occur. The issues pertaining to local government have been studied to death. This is evidenced by the volume of reports that have been produced over the

years. It is now time to act. It is for this reason that I encourage this committee to support Bill 103. I urge the committee not to support the status quo, which will only harm the Toronto area in the long run. I think everybody agrees the status quo needs to be changed.

Finally, I'd like to briefly discuss what appears to be happening in my community with respect to the so-called referendum, or public opinion poll, that is being conducted by the city of Scarborough. I am not a big supporter of conducting referenda and public opinion polls, as I believe that we pay our elected officials at all levels to make decisions, including those that are difficult and appear to be unpopular. The concept of requesting a referendum whenever a difficult decision is required to be made is not the way to govern our society.

In addition to the unwise use of taxpayers' money, the referendum process in Scarborough has many flaws. My concerns about the referendum process that is taking place are even more exacerbated when I examine the ballot that was delivered to my household and see that I am required to sign and note my address on the ballot. It is paramount in any democratic society that there be a secret ballot. I will not delve into the theory or rationale behind that, but I think it's well accepted.

What further troubles me is what was included with the ballot. Upon my opening the envelope that included the ballot, a letter from the mayor could be found. This letter provides facts allegedly on the amalgamation and reasons why not to support the amalgamation. In addition, a professionally produced brochure by the city of Scarborough provided further information as to why I should vote No in the referendum.

If the city of Scarborough felt so compelled to enclose information with its ballot, it should have at least provided a similar opportunity for the other side of this debate to enclose information as well. Although I do not support the dissemination of any information with a ballot, at least by allowing both sides of the debate to enclose information with the ballot the process established by the city of Scarborough may have had some legitimacy. As it currently stands, it would appear that the referendum, or public opinion poll, in Scarborough lacks all legitimacy, even that of an unscientific public opinion poll.

As late as Friday it was reported by the local cable news in Scarborough that the city clerk would now be accepting ballots that have not been signed. This causes me great concern with respect to the potential for abuse. Clearly the haphazard manner in which this public opinion poll or referendum is being undertaken is highly questionable. In fact, I suspect that a show of hands at any local Scarborough mall would be a no more illegitimate expression of public opinion.

I urge this government to proceed with the amalgamation so that we can guarantee continued prosperity for the city of Toronto as we approach the turn of the century.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We've got a little more than two minutes for questions.

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you for coming down to make a presentation to our committee, Mr Proszanski. I have a couple of questions if we have the time. You did mention that this can save tens and perhaps hundreds of millions

of dollars. How much do you think we are going to save with respect to the megacity implementation if it's implemented as it has been proposed?

**Mr Proszanski:** I'm not in a position to provide you with any details of that, but I think government restructuring and private sector restructuring has the effect in the long term of saving moneys.

**Mr Sergio:** I'm sorry; you don't want to provide details or you don't have details?

**Mr Proszanski:** I'm not in a position to provide you with the details. I'm here as a citizen. I'm providing you with the fact that I think government restructuring and private sector restructuring in the long term has or should have the ability to save money. That's why I'm supporting the amalgamation.

**Mr Sergio:** Our problem is this: that the government has not provided us with any details, facts, figures, statistics, data, anything at all on which we could base that indeed maybe by 2000 or 2001, according to the Premier and the Minister of Finance, we could see this so-called 10% tax reduction. From our information, we won't get this reduction. If the government had this information, why wouldn't the government provide you, provide us and the people with that information to support its thesis?

**Mr Proszanski:** As I said, I'm not in a position to provide you with that information. As a general rule of thumb, restructuring and operating more efficiently has the ability to save money.

**Mr Sergio:** How do you feel about the downloading of other services on to the local municipalities?

**Mr Proszanski:** I think it should be looked at very carefully. I think the government should look at it very carefully and not overdownload.

**Mr Sergio:** Would you feel more comfortable if the government were to stop proceeding with the bill as it is now and say: "We're getting a lot of flak here from a lot of people, and evidently the downloading is stirring up a lot of people out there. Let's stop, let's look at it, and then we'll come back with some other format"?

**Mr Proszanski:** My understanding is that this bill is not a bill to deal with downloading. I'm just aware that there have been reports in existence about amalgamating and operating cities more efficiently since I moved to Toronto over 10 years ago and something needs to be done.

**Mr Sergio:** I appreciate that. Every other study, including the Crombie report, the Trimmer report and the Golden report, at least received considerable input, if not public; this one here did not. It came out from the ministry like thunder in a clear sky. What do you say to that, that nobody has had any input as to the idea of this megacity all of a sudden here?

**Mr Proszanski:** The input is being achieved with this committee. There are public meetings in my community. We've had two or three public meetings to provide input to our MPPs. Everybody here seems to be accessible. I think there is lots of public input.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Sergio. We've gone beyond our time. Thank you, Mr Proszanski, for coming forward and making your presentation.

## MARY LOU DICKINSON

**The Chair:** Would Mary Lou Dickinson please come forward. Good afternoon, and welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes to make a presentation.

**Ms Mary Lou Dickinson:** I'm a citizen of the city of Toronto. I want to make one comment first. I understand that downloading isn't part of Bill 103, but I'd like to say something. I feel strongly about it, and I feel it is connected to the issue of amalgamation, although not in this bill. I'm aghast at the prospect of the downloading of social services and the impact this would have.

My friend and colleague tells me that when her parents came to Toronto as young immigrants there was no infrastructure and no social services, and that in their 80s, as they watch the city they helped build, they fear they will leave it as they found it, a mean city, for their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all of whom are residents of the city of Toronto.

1640

In any case, now I'll get to what I came to say around Bill 103 and the process.

A long time ago I came from a very small town in what was then the very far north; it's not so far north now, but it is north of North Bay. It took a while to understand a city and how to develop community in a large place. I had been in Montreal for a while as a student so I knew how university communities develop, but I found coming to a city to live somewhat overwhelming, and I found Toronto overwhelming. But over time, I found that at the heart of cities that work is something that's shared by small and large places: the existence of communities which are of a size that people can identify with them and care about others in them. That seemed to be a way of connecting with Toronto.

There is history to the existing cities here and we attach our own roots to these histories. I have intentionally lived and worked within the boundaries of the city of Toronto for over 35 years. That place has meaning to me and that size is manageable. I've worn a number of different hats. I don't know that it's relevant, but at one time I indexed the bylaws of the city of Toronto; the one I remember is that no cows were allowed on Yonge Street even into the 1980s. That makes me feel attached somehow to the city, having had that involvement as well.

In any case, there are political structures which are responsible through elections, which are accessible and rooted in a common history and evolving shared values. There is a soul to my community. I go downtown to St Lawrence Market. I go to a downtown church. I live in north Toronto. I've lived in the Annex. I work downtown. There is a soul, a spiritual reality, and amalgamation is like a bulldozer running roughshod over this landscape.

I guess you can tell by now that I feel very strongly about Bill 103 and amalgamation. I am convinced that, as it's presently conceived, it will erode the sense of community so important to healthy cities. The existing cities and borough within the Metropolitan area work. There's undoubtedly a need for regional coordination, but not a need to destroy the vibrant local structures we now have.

There's undoubtedly a need for change and I'm not afraid of change, but there's a need for respectful change, change respectful of the best of what exists and that builds on the participation and consensus of the citizenry. We now have, on the whole, a safe and healthy place to live. I for one, and I hear this echoed across this metropolitan area, would welcome the chance to enter into a process that would allow discussion on change and on ways to strengthen community.

This process doesn't allow that. The minister has already said he's not going to pay attention, and I notice some people over there talking and not paying attention to me. I was at the meeting of the Conservative member last week in my local area where every question was greeted, not with the openness of dialogue, but with rhetoric to convince that the Conservative government knows what's best for us. The consultation is a sham, so what I feel most strongly about right now is the loss of democracy.

If a man said to his wife, "You should be able to feed this family of four on X number of dollars," and she said, "I can't," but she kept on trying because she had no other choice, and he then said, "Get a job, you're lazy," and she said, "The children are only babies," and he said, "Get a job," and wouldn't enter into dialogue or listen to any suggestions or alternatives around how this unit functioned and didn't engage in communication which respected both parties, then when he didn't like what they ate he blamed her, I think we'd know what to call that. We'd call it abuse. I see this process as being about power and control, and both bill and process is a flagrant abuse of power, quite frankly.

I resent having my voice and those of my fellow citizens silenced by making my elected representatives subservient to a board of trustees, then a transition team with powers only a dictatorship would sanction. My father, who was an ardent Conservative all his life until he died around 20 years ago, went to war to preserve democracy. I can recall the three years he was gone and the letters he wrote about why. He's probably rolling over in his grave at what's happening in Ontario. He raised his children with that phrase from Churchill, "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all others," the sort of phrase that makes thoughtful children think, what does that mean? You remember this kind of phrase and gradually understand how messy democracy is but how anything else would erode freedom.

I heard at my local member's meeting last week his statement that "This is Canada," as if the mere utterance of such words would remind people that nothing that would offend democracy could happen here, that we were safe if we believed that simply by saying we're in Canada, we're safe. Nothing really could be further from the truth. It's precisely because we have freedom that we must watch vigilantly and guard against infringing it. No one is immune to abuse of power; not me, not you. Our history has examples of gross injustice. To forget or deny how vulnerable freedom is is very dangerous. I wonder why our local newspapers aren't crying out about that every day.

I am here to say it's critical that you and the government hear and attend to the message that process matters,

that continued delivery of services matters, that community matters in cities as well as in towns; and also that in claiming moral ownership to fiscal responsibility, you do me and my colleagues who oppose this bill and are concerned about the process an injustice. Future generations are our legacy also. The health and safety and financial stability of our communities are precisely what we feel are at stake.

My recommendation is, restore democracy. I don't call this a consultation. What you intend to do is a foregone conclusion. I would suggest instead that you withdraw Bill 103. I know you have endless reports and studies; I've heard the phrase "studied to death." I don't know that they've ever been consolidated. I think they need to be given to the people, and we need to be given the responsibility to discuss our local structures and how we're governed and the opportunity to arrive at consensus, working with everybody, with you and everyone.

I challenge the minister and this government to preserve our tradition of democratic consultation and to help us build healthier communities, not to silence our voices and erode our cities and our services. If there are those in the Conservative government who are willing or able to see that democracy is being eroded by this process, and if they can't convince their colleagues, I challenge them to cross the floor.

**Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt):** Thank you very much, Ms Dickinson. I want to put a proposition to you and get your response. It seems to me that the government has a bit of a dilemma because they are realizing the error of their ways, although we haven't heard that admission yet, and I think they need a way out of this. That's one alternative. The other is that they will just continue to ram this thing through, knowing they will pay a political price for it. Either they've been convinced by the arguments on the merit or they are going to be convinced by the arguments because they know they'll pay a political price if they persist in their actions.

It seems to me that the referendum gives them a useful way out. It gives them a way out, if, as we expect, people will vote against the megacity, in saying: "Then we are prepared to listen to the people. We're prepared to pause, take a look at what the alternatives might be, engage people in a real discussion and go on from there." Does that sound to you like one way the government could find a way out of this mess?

**Ms Dickinson:** It sounds like a recommendation that could be made. I don't think there is any loss — I suppose there is. I was going to say I don't think there is a loss of face in withdrawing something that you recognize has perhaps arrived at in too much haste.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Dickinson, for coming forward.

### OSCAR JOHVICAS

**The Chair:** Would Oscar Johvicas please come forward. Good afternoon, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Oscar Johvicas:** Mr Chairman and committee members, I want to thank you for the opportunity of speaking to you today on Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing governments of Metropolitan Toronto by

incorporating a new municipality to be known as the city of Toronto. My name is Oscar Johvicas and I am secretary-treasurer of our small family business, Co-Mar Management Services Inc. We have our offices in downtown Toronto, where we publish an international trade fairs and conferences directory, as well as being the Canadian representative for Hannover Trade Fairs of Hanover, Germany. As the Canadian representative we promote to Canadian manufacturers, associations and professionals the advantages of either exhibiting at or visiting the world-class trade fairs which occur at the world's biggest trade fair grounds in Hanover, Germany, and where Expo 2000 will occur in that year.

Toronto is internationally known as Canada's pre-eminent city, the centre of Canada's financial, business, entertainment and communications networks. My apologies to Mayor Mel Lastman, but people outside Canada do not know there is a North York, nor an East York, Etobicoke, Scarborough etc. Indeed, companies from Metro Toronto that promote their products and services outside Canada are well advised to promote themselves as Toronto-based companies, including a Toronto address.

**1650**

When it comes to business development, it is much more economic, efficient and rational for Toronto to market itself internationally as a unified business destination instead of the current city of Toronto and five internationally unknown municipalities, each competing against each other. I've witnessed that at the trade fairs in Hanover, by the way.

That is the whole point of this bill: to amalgamate seven competing, ineffective municipalities into one strong, unified, effective municipality, the new city of Toronto. Why do we need seven planning and development departments competing against each other, seven parks and recreation departments, seven human resources departments, six health departments and six fire departments? Common sense tells you that the amalgamation of these departments within a unified city of Toronto will mean increased efficiency and effectiveness and the subsequent saving in costs.

Does it make any sense that there is a Metro police force but not a Metro fire department? Presumably those who are against a unified stronger Toronto, if they are consistent, will want the Metro police force abolished and each of the current municipalities in Metro with their own police department. It's when you follow the logic of those who are against amalgamation that you see how ludicrous their position really is. Given that 70% of municipal services are already provided by Metro, why continue to fund the six municipal bureaucracies to provide 30% of our services?

I wish to strongly commend this government for the courage it has shown in its commitment to building a stronger Toronto. There is questionable political advantage to this government in promoting amalgamation. Instead of six weak municipalities in Metro Toronto, there will be one strong municipality, the biggest municipality in Ontario, if not Canada. The mayor of the new unified city of Toronto will in effect be the second most powerful politician in Ontario. There will no longer be the possibility of a divide-and-conquer scenario when it

comes to the provincial government dealing with one Toronto for all of us.

As well as being a small business person, I am also a homeowner and taxpayer in the Beach within the current city of Toronto, and for a while there, listening to a former presenter, I thought the St Lawrence Market and the Beach were going to disappear in this amalgamation. I must have missed that in the fine print. I am concerned about my property taxes. Since 1985 my school taxes have gone up 120% while enrolment and inflation have increased only 56%.

Given the accomplishments of our students in standardized tests, such as those testing their math and science capabilities, this expenditure has not been well spent when you compare our Ontario students nationally and internationally. Having education costs as the responsibility of the provincial government will ensure that all students in Ontario equally will receive a quality education. That is essential if Ontario and Canada are to remain competitive internationally.

Perhaps the holding of six referendums best exemplifies the moral and economic bankruptcy of having six municipalities within Metro Toronto. Is it undemocratic for the duly elected government of Ontario to amalgamate the municipalities of Metro Toronto into one unified, strong city? Constitutionally, as you all know, municipalities fall within the jurisdiction of the provinces. In Ontario, whether it was the creation of Metropolitan Toronto in 1953 or the amalgamation of Fort William and Port Arthur into Thunder Bay in 1970, the practice here in Ontario and across Canada is not to give municipal governments a veto on amalgamation, not surprising, given the conflict of interest of municipal politicians wanting to protect their jobs and perks.

I call on the representatives of the two opposition parties and their leaders to indicate whether or not they agree with this practice of not holding binding referendums with respect to municipal amalgamations. Moreover, if the opposition parties think municipal amalgamation should be subject to binding referendums and if a majority in one municipality decides not to amalgamate, will they exempt that municipality from being amalgamated, should they ever become the government? If either of the two opposition parties supports binding referendums with respect to municipal amalgamation, will they ensure that the binding referendums are unbiased and secret?

My wife, Jennifer, heard from one of our best friends, the Campbells, who live in Scarborough, that their household, which is composed of two qualified municipal voters, received along with their three mail-in ballots on the amalgamation referendum a covering letter from their mayor, Frank Faubert, and an instructional pamphlet on how to fill out their mail-in ballots. Both the mayor's letter and the instructional pamphlet, in effect, urged them to vote no.

Moreover, their mail-in ballot is not a secret ballot. On the very same side that you vote either no — interestingly that no is first — or yes, you are required to sign and print your name and address. This is outrageous, and the mayor and municipal election officials in Scarborough do not believe in a secret ballot. That act alone disqualifies

the result of the referendum in Scarborough and probably taints the referendum overall for all the other municipalities. Heaven knows what they're doing.

Thinking that our friends in Scarborough must be mistaken, I asked them if I could see the mailing they received. They readily provided the material to me, which I have here. In case any of you don't believe it, you can look at it. Moreover, you can look at the attachments I've added. I've made a photocopy of all of it so you can clearly see for yourselves the non-democratic approach to referendums that the city of Scarborough is taking with regard to this material. You will find a copy of the Scarborough non-secret mail-in ballot, Mayor Frank Faubert's biased letter, and the biased instruction pamphlet attached to the back of my written submission.

I suspect that much of the vocal opposition to Bill 103 is not from persons who truly oppose this legislation but from special interest groups and from political partisans who are unhappy with the election of Premier Mike Harris's Progressive Conservative government, which promised to reduce the size and cost of government, deliver more services for less cost, and reduce the tax burden on Ontarians, and is now faithfully fulfilling those election promises.

It is generally acknowledged that Canada is one of the most overgoverned countries in the world. The result is overtaxation, duplication, red tape and bureaucracy, and a near-10% unemployment rate across Canada. Surely we do not need four levels of government — federal, provincial, regional and municipal — with all the resulting extra bureaucracy and taxes. I applaud the leadership and courage that this government is showing in removing an unnecessary level of government. The resulting stronger and unified new city of Toronto will be able to compete on a global level while at the same time ensuring that we continue to be recognized as the best place to live in North America. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Johvicas. You've effectively used your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward today.

#### ARON HALPERN

**The Chair:** Would Aron Halpern please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Halpern, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Aron Halpern:** Thank you very much, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. I appear before you today to express my views on the proposed amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto into one municipality of the city of Toronto. As a younger member of our society, I think it is imperative that people like myself exercise their right to make their voices heard on issues that will affect them in the coming years. It is also imperative that those who currently hold office and the reins of power listen to people like myself and take our views into equal consideration. As I am sure you are aware, it is my generation that will have to deal with any legacy left behind by any actions taken today.

As a member of the future generation of our province, I've become more and more disillusioned with the debate

over this bill, its intentions, its ramifications and its logic. To me the logic and intention behind this bill are clear. It is a clear attempt to make government more effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of the people of this community.

However, I believe that the original goal and purpose of this bill has been blurred to an incredible extent by those who have a vested interest in ensuring that this initiative fails and will reflect poorly upon the current government. Local politicians have entered into an alliance with the provincial opposition to ensure that their respective interests are met.

As I see it, those at the municipal level have an obvious reason to work and ensure that the proposed amalgamation does not occur. If one reviews the counter-proposal for the governance of Metropolitan Toronto put forward by the mayors, this point is made clear. The mayors have proposed that the only level of government that is to be removed should be the Metro level; that the individual cities and boroughs will retain their boundaries, councils and jurisdiction, while relieving themselves of a check on their own power.

The mayors propose the retention of six separate councils, six mayoral positions and 48 councillors. The point is made by the proposal itself; one can see the self-serving nature of it. The mayors propose to retain their own positions, their own jurisdictions, while getting rid of a check on their jurisdiction and power. To me this is incredible. The proposal by the mayors is completely overlooking the purpose and reason for this legislation. If it were the intent of the government to ensure that the status quo would continue to exist, it would not have introduced this legislation in the first place.

#### 1700

The extreme partisan and self-serving nature of many of those who oppose amalgamation can also be seen in those who have appeared before this committee. For example, Alexa McDonough, who is the leader of our federal NDP, appeared here in an obvious attempt to raise her profile for the simple fact that nobody knows who she is and there's an upcoming federal election. At the same time, she is hoping to endear herself to those activists and opposition members who may be able to lend her an electoral hand in the coming months. This type of contribution is not helpful to the process.

The way I see it is that the legislation's goals is to remove various levels of government, not to destroy individual communities and remove politicians just for the sake of removing politicians. This bill is aiming to ensure that this community continue to adapt and grow in an ever-changing world. Today the six cities and boroughs are only divided by imaginary lines. When the concept of a metropolitan system of government was introduced in the 1950s, many of the cities and boroughs were distinct urban areas due to the simple fact that they were still separated by tracts of undeveloped land. Today, with urban sprawl and the incredible growth that Metro Toronto has experienced, it is impossible to see any physical delineation between those communities. However, it must also be noted that many villages and smaller communities such as Leaside, Forest Hill, Parkdale and

Don Mills still retain their very distinct nature as a community.

One of the largest and most persuasive arguments used by the anti-amalgamation coalition is that any removal of their distinction as cities or boroughs will remove any sense of community that exists there presently. It shocks me that any group of individuals would identify themselves with their local form of municipal government, that they need the city of North York, for example, or the borough of East York to exist as an administrative body before they may exist as a community or neighbourhood. A community is not defined by its government but by the people who live there. If the only reason to identify oneself as a member of a community is by the name of its local government, then those people should not experience a great deal of trauma adjusting to becoming a part of the new city of Toronto.

I cannot see the negative side to having one department deliver a service throughout the current metropolitan area or having one cohesive, thought-out city plan or one tax level. There is no logic that will explain to me how costs can go up under such an arrangement. By liquidating some redundant facilities and lessening their administrative bureaucracy, I can only see costs going down.

As I see it, another reason this proposal is being fought against so hard by organizations such as unions is simple. The unions see the end to a very advantageous circumstance: the ability to play city governments off one another. Much like what is seen between the Big Three auto makers or Stelco and Dofasco currently in Hamilton, when a contract is settled in one jurisdiction, the pressure is on the other jurisdictions to match or surpass it. This allows for a bidding war to emerge which is wholly beneficial to the union and their members but not to the taxpayer. With amalgamation, this cost-boosting circumstance will come to an end.

It must be pointed out that the reduction in staffing levels of the city can be accomplished through attrition over a few years. Therefore, those who are arguing from a position of the worry over job losses and security are blowing the impact of amalgamation out of proportion.

Competition between existing governments for new business and investment have an effect much like the spiral effect that unions can create. Creating one city with one development department with one level of taxation and regulation makes obvious logical sense. With the high degree of variation in tax levels and regulations, investing in Toronto must be an absolute nightmare for local business owners and those from elsewhere who are considering investing in this area. An incongruous patchwork of standards and regulations is frowned upon and deemed harmful when one discusses education in this province or when one discusses health care in this country.

The same rule applies to Metro Toronto, albeit on a smaller scale. A scattered patchwork of rules, regulations and taxation levels is harmful to business, thus to job creation and thus to the community of Metro Toronto. The competition created between jurisdictions for the limited pool of investments and new jobs creates a downward spiral as each jurisdiction attempts to undercut the other, thus lessening the overall benefit of any new

investment to the community and creating hostility and tension between jurisdictions.

Currently, while one city may enjoy the benefits of having the actual plant, the workers may live elsewhere, perhaps in another city or borough, thus diluting the benefits of new investment for both communities. Even with the competition driven downward spiral created between the jurisdictions, none of the current city governments can compete with the outlying 905 region due to higher fixed costs found in administrative bureaucracy, infrastructure, a lack of planning and a higher density of people.

As one unified city, Toronto administration can be reduced, fixed costs can be reduced, and the region can become more competitive as a whole for investment and reap the benefits as a whole community. It is simply not fair that some restaurants can be allowed to have smoking while across the street another business cannot. Such disparities, between neighbours separated by a few feet and an imaginary line in some circumstances, is ludicrous and harmful to all.

As a young person who will graduate in a couple of months, hopefully, and hope to find meaningful full-time employment, I can only say that I expect from my elected officials that they may take every measure reasonably possible to ensure that economic growth and jobs are a priority and available to me.

As for the question of representation and input, I do not see any problems with the current proposal. I do not believe that with fewer politicians I will have less access and input into the direction of my community. I am satisfied that my vote will continue to be worth as much as it was before, since the entire city will be divided equally and thus every vote will have the same weight.

I have never had a problem with getting attention or assistance from my provincial or federal members of Parliament, and since the population per ward will be similar to these levels, I am confident my needs will be met. If they are not, I will simply vote against the councillor during the next election.

The local neighbourhood committees will provide effective and strong lobbying bodies to use against councillors and the mayor. By ensuring that I, as a citizen, can get involved with the organization, I will be empowering myself to act on behalf of my community and my own self-interest. Such grass-roots participation is valuable and effective, as now demonstrated by the various ratepayers and neighbourhood associations that currently thrive in our community.

Thus I cannot see any limitation or reduction in the opportunity or value of my direct input as a result of the proposed amalgamation. At the same time, we will have the opportunity to reduce the numbers of paid representatives, thus allowing us to save money or reallocate these funds elsewhere.

The concern with the elected trustees to oversee the transition I believe is seriously overblown. It does not seem odd to me —

**The Chair:** Mr Halpern, I'm sorry, you'll have to wrap up. We're to the end of your time.

**Mr Halpern:** I'm going to have to wrap up, okay. In other words, I support the amalgamation and it seems to

me it's a very straightforward and logical approach to making sure that government changes and adapts to new realities, so that we can go together into the future and grow together as a community and not as separate competing jurisdictions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this afternoon.

1710

### RICHARD THERRIEN

**The Chair:** Would Richard Therrien please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Richard Therrien:** I'd like to begin by saying that I appear here very bruised and battered, as I've had to pinch myself throughout all levels of this process, that some people say democracy doesn't exist. I had to pinch myself when I called the Clerk's office and arranged for this appointment, I had to pinch myself when she gave me a time, and I had to pinch myself when I got here to make sure that democracy really does work and that we're doing a good job of hearing all sides of this argument.

My name is Richard Therrien and I have been a citizen of this city since the end of October 1996. Some might say that this is too short a time for a person to make a presentation to you, but I disagree. In fact, I would say I'm an excellent person to make a statement on the future of this city, not only myself but all others who have recently arrived here and are free from the nostalgia which may be clouding the judgement of some presenters.

Nostalgia should not be and is not a reason to put off this next step in the evolution of Toronto. Change has never been easy and it's not hard to find some total quality expert or consultant who is willing to hold the hand of an organization to effect some sort of change. Obviously, this goes much further than that.

Currently, I reside in Etobicoke and was flabbergasted by the goings on of both council and the city administrator's office when I first arrived here. Further, I could not and still can't comprehend the total lack of accountability which that council displayed as it related to the expense account affair. This act alone demonstrates that change is needed. Accountability is needed. We need to take better care of our resources. We need to better plan our collective futures.

Many of my new Etobicoke neighbours tell me of the days when lower Etobicoke was thriving, with a variety of small to medium-sized businesses, but that after tax breaks given to companies by towns such as Mississauga and Vaughan, they left Etobicoke after receiving no such comparable offer from that city. This is another incident which demonstrates the need for better planning.

No matter what happens, Toronto and the GTA will always be the economic engine of both Ontario and Canada. Don't we owe it to ourselves, to those who stand to benefit from the spillover effects, to make this city the best it possibly can be? I'm not going to tell this committee anything new, something eye-opening and revolutionary in nature, but I will tell the committee this: If you plan on stifling growth in this area, if you plan on driving

businesses away, whether it be a unionized shop or not, if you plan on not creating a better place for your children, then slap on a "Down with megacity" button.

I, for one, plan to make Toronto my new home because my old one, as nostalgic as I am about it, was unable to afford me the opportunity to succeed and to contribute. It was a city with a city council that was formed by councillors and a mayor who lacked overall vision for the future of that city, who were caught up in the squabbles of the moment, squabbles concerning things such as hospital restructuring and one-tier versus two-tier local government.

On the hospital issue, they were unable to provide the province with a satisfactory solution, or in the hospital case no solution at all, and hence had one imposed upon it by an outside — I mean outside to local government — committee. Then what happened? The community was up in arms over the fact that its local council was unable to come up with a solution. The only solution the municipal politicians could come up with was that it was the big, bad province that "shoved this hospital restructuring down our throats," but yet they had been given two years or more to get together, talk about it and come up with a suitable hospital restructuring plan. Now most citizens of my old community would agree that they're not exactly thrilled with the new result of this squabbling.

Then what happens with regard to this? This also relates to my need for accountability. The local municipal politicians, who had been given two years to come up with this solution, trash the government, face the media and get some exposure. After council recesses they go back to their offices, they have a drink of water or whatever and they say: "Whew. I'm glad someone else is going to be taking the heat for making this large, momentous decision, which we had absolutely no direction to take. We didn't have the intestinal fortitude to make a decision in this community," and hence, provide it with no future, no overall vision. Of course, they dream of being re-elected by trashing the province.

By taking the heat, the province has shown that it is willing to make decisions to better our futures when local politicians are not up to it. What I'm saying here is, don't put too much faith in your local politicians. They may be good for your area, but when it comes to doing what's right for the province as a whole they may lose sight of the intended goal.

The new councillors elected to represent the new Toronto will have the task of overall accountability for the entire health of this city thrust upon them, and I'm sure it is a responsibility they will not take lightly. As I speak, there are city councillors and mayors preparing their new election strategies for the new Toronto, so I find it highly hypocritical that on the one hand, they sit here and dictate to us that this is a bad bill, that it will somehow ruin our lives and that we are better off with the status quo, while they call organizational meetings with their local supporters.

There is nothing wrong with holding these meetings; it's just that the individual who's saying one thing and doing these meetings should take one side or another. I look forward to seeing the names of individuals who will present themselves as candidates in the next municipal

election and see how many of them opposed these proceedings, and those who are now chanting "Down with megacity," a term which I personally dislike, will then be chanting, "Elect me so I can make sure your interests are represented."

I would also like to take this opportunity to applaud those municipal politicians who have publicly supported this bill even though they may be in danger of not being re-elected. This bill is not about the now, it is about what we can be, and I feel that we can be so much more than this. Some individuals would very much like to make this into a complicated issue when there is no need to do so. Certainly, there will be logistical difficulties to overcome, which we will, as well as many other difficulties we will face.

I ask the detractors of this plan, should this bill become law, to assist in the creation of our new city for it will be a city for all of us to enjoy and to work in. Your neighbours will still be your neighbours. The streets you were born on will still be there. There are many places for nostalgia, but not here. I suspect that if this government were not in power today, whoever was the government would be facing similar pressures to do what is being done here today. Let us plan our futures together and I'm sure we will be successful together.

I believe that the logistical instruments for change being proposed by the province, ie the transition team, will consider the input of many. I doubt it is going to discard any good work already being done in this area.

On just a few final notes, I'd like to say that since I am a new citizen of this city, one of the things I very much look forward to is the amalgamation of our transit system. As I reside in Etobicoke I have the luxury of taking either the subway or the GO train to work, but should I select to take the GO train I am then forced to pay a separate token for a five or 10-minute bus ride to my residence. This obviously adds to my cost.

I think we can do a good job of keeping our costs down. I think we can learn from many models throughout the world.

I look forward to having one strong voice for Toronto and all Torontonians, and I very much look forward to making this my new home.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Mr Therrien. Just a couple of points you didn't touch on. There has been much ado about some of the aspects of this bill being undemocratic and I wonder if you care to offer an opinion on the contradiction in terms and how a democratically elected government, when it brings forward a bill, can by definition be undemocratic. Are you concerned about the fact that, for example, there will be trustees to oversee your interests as a taxpayer to make sure no council does anything untoward?

**Mr Therrien:** Yes, in university I was involved in student governments and there were many squabbles over all types of referenda there as well. The rules are always changing. They seem to be fluid. I don't really think we can put any credibility to the current "democratic" referendums process taking place in the borough and cities today.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Sorry, I wasn't speaking of the referendum. In the bill there's an aspect that talks about the fact

that the province will appoint three trustees to oversee the budgets after each council has duly passed the budget —

**Mr Therrien:** Yes.

**Mr Gilchrist:** — not before, and then simply be there to make sure the council abides by their own democratically voted-on budget. Do you have any concerns about that? Do you see that as somehow dictatorial, which is the phrase being thrown around?

**Mr Therrien:** Well, no, I don't, because I have to question myself, why would the provincial government, representing all Ontarians, want to kill the economic engine of this city by thwarting it into some sort of dictatorial process or some process where there aren't enough checks and balances? I have faith in the proposed bill.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Therrien, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1720

JENNIFER KEESMAAT  
SYLVIA KEESMAAT

**The Chair:** Would Jennifer and Sylvia Keesmaat come forward, please. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Jennifer Keesmaat:** My name is Jennifer Keesmaat. My husband and I have recently started a private, non-profit corporation that is designed to fund and direct various projects that lead to meaningful job opportunities for street youth. I live in the city of Etobicoke. I am also of the younger generation and I am also concerned about the future of this city as well as of this province.

**Dr Sylvia Keesmaat:** My name is Dr Sylvia Keesmaat. I am a resident of the city of York and a professor at the Institute for Christian Studies in the city of Toronto. We are not a part of any special interest group. We are individual citizens who have read Bill 103 and considered it thoughtfully.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Yet we come before you with a sense of futility. We have 10 minutes to speak, and you are listening to hundreds of submissions. We can see the boredom on your faces. There is a sense, across this city, that not only these hearings but also the referenda are futile, since no one is really listening. Therefore, we have but one question: What would it take to arouse a thoughtful response, a serious consideration, of the impact that Bill 103 will have on the welfare of this city? If there was anything that would make amalgamation unacceptable, what would it be?

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear that a megacity is less efficient than smaller cities? You have heard that argued and seen that the studies support such an argument.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear that a megacity will cost more? You've heard in other presentations that cities over one million people cost significantly more per capita to run than cities of less than one million people.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear business people argue that a megacity will have an adverse effect on businesses and corporations in Toronto? You have heard such arguments.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear stories of how large councils are less attuned to communities and neighbourhoods? You have heard such stories.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear personal stories of how larger councils are less responsive and less accountable to individual citizens? You have heard such stories.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear an outcry against the appointment of provincial trustees as undemocratic? You have heard such an outcry.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear that a megacity will increase unemployment rather than providing needed jobs? The KPMG study argues precisely that.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear that amalgamation will increase the cost and reduce the availability of social programs and services such as libraries, pools and community centres? Studies show this to be true.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear stories of the amalgamation of other cities where violence, poverty and crime increased? You have heard about Detroit, Los Angeles and even London, England, where I have also lived for a while.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear a groundswell of opposition that unites both the political right and the political left, both Rosedale and the Annex? You have seen just that.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear an outcry that crosses racial divisions? You can hear such a united outcry in my own riding of Oakwood.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear that a large mega-council will be unable to effectively care for the environmental wellbeing of such a diverse and large area? You have heard exactly this.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear that creating a large megacity with an enormous bureaucracy goes against the conservative ideals of smaller, more local government with more accountability? You have heard just that.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear personal stories and fears from a wide variety of citizens such as business people, lawyers, social justice workers, politicians, public service employees and ordinary citizens across Metro? These people have spoken. Have you heard them?

**Dr Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear these people speak not only to their own interests, but to the interests also of those in our cities who are too poor, too hungry and too despairing to speak for themselves? People have spoken to those interests. Have you heard them?

**Ms Keesmaat:** Would you need to hear of an alternative vision that addresses the current problems our cities face? You have heard such alternative visions in the Trimmer, Crombie and Golden studies, and in a number of submissions made in these very meetings.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Our concern is about process. We would like to believe that this process is not a sham. We would like to hear that you too have concerns about the negative impact of amalgamation, and that as democratically elected officials you are not turning a deaf ear to those citizens who speak to you. We want to believe that you are weighing the evidence and looking for the most just and fair way forward which will promote not only

economic wellbeing but also human dignity and mutual responsibility.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Here's our question: Mr Hastings, what would you need to reconsider Bill 103?

**Dr Keesmaat:** Mr Parker, what would you need to hear to consider an alternative vision for making our communities function better?

**Ms Keesmaat:** Mr Doug Ford, my MPP: What would you need to consider the megacity a bad idea?

**Mr Douglas B. Ford (Etobicoke-Humber):** I was at Sherway Plaza at noonhour —

**Dr Keesmaat:** We're still speaking.

**Mrs Keesmaat:** It's actually a rhetorical question.

**Dr Keesmaat:** Mrs Munro, Vice-Chair, what are your hopes for the future of these cities? What would you need to hear to consider that amalgamation will lead to harm and not good?

**Mrs Keesmaat:** We do not have time for everyone to answer these questions. We would like to hear from at least those just named. Are your minds already made up? If not, what would make Bill 103 a problem?

**The Vice-Chair:** Are you finished?

**Mrs Keesmaat:** We're finished, thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Questions, then, from Mr Sergio, please.

**Mr Sergio:** Can I turn our time, Madam Chair, to the government side to answer some of the questions of the deputants' wonderful presentation? May I, Madam Chair?

**The Vice-Chair:** You can ask, yes.

**Mr Sergio:** Can I concede my time? I think it would be nice, perhaps, if they wish to comment.

**The Vice-Chair:** We have to have consent. Is there consent?

**Mr Silipo:** Absolutely, yes. I'd love to hear the answers.

**Mr Hastings:** Madam Chair, I don't mind giving unanimous consent, but the procedure here, is it not, is that the deputants make their presentations —

**Mr Silipo:** Just answer the question, John. Come on. They asked you some questions; just answer the questions.

**Mr Hastings:** I'm more than prepared to answer, but not in this forum.

*Interjections.*

**The Vice-Chair:** Order.

**Mr Silipo:** Why not in this forum?

**Mr Hastings:** Because that's not our procedure in this forum, and you know it.

**Mr Silipo:** Talk to them.

**Mr Hastings:** I've been listening to them.

**Mr Silipo:** Talk to them. They've asked you the questions.

*Interjections.*

**The Vice-Chair:** Order. Mr Hastings —

**Mr Hastings:** He knows what the procedure is in this room. They make their presentation and we ask the questions.

**Mr Silipo:** Right. You set the rules.

**Mr Hastings:** Those are the rules of the committee, and you know it.

**The Vice-Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Hastings. Order.

**Mr Silipo:** Rules can be changed.

**The Vice-Chair:** All right. We will recess for one minute.

*The committee recessed from 1727 to 1728.*

**The Vice-Chair:** We have about a minute and a half in which to continue. Mr Hastings. Sorry — Mr Ford.

**Mr Ford:** I would like to answer your questions, and maybe we get a little off track here, but about three or four hours ago, whatever time it is now — I've lost a little track of the time — I was before a panel at noon-hour at Sherway Plaza and we had approximately 200, 300 or 400 people there asking questions from the floor. When I started there, a lot of people were frightened and they asked me several questions and I told them I was on a panel down here and I said some of the people down here come in day in and day out. One woman came up to me and she said, "Are you criticizing those people there?" I said: "Not at all. I'm here to listen."

What I'm telling you is that these people down there were asking all kinds of questions, and this went over the air on the Motts show, and I claimed that I think this policy is good for Metro Toronto, excellent, the reason being, as I told them, I've lived here for 64 years. I've watched this place from Dundas Street East, they call it now — that was a mud road and it used to be called Apple Grove. That now is paved. I remember people, even when I was a little kid, saying, "They shouldn't pave this; it'll cause too much traffic." This is all nonsense.

What this is all about is major groups of people getting together, protecting their own interests. They're not interested in the whole of Metro Toronto; they're interested in protecting their own interests. I'm telling you, you're asking all these leading questions — you can shake your head too — but when I left down there, there was a whole change of attitude because the people didn't understand what's going on, and I don't really believe you do either, and that's a fact.

**Ms Keesmaat:** Well, I don't actually represent a group —

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry. We've run out of time. Thank you very much for presenting here. Thank you for appearing.

#### GORDON WALKER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Gordon Walker. Good afternoon, Mr Walker, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Gordon Walker:** It's a pleasure to be here. I come here in support of Bill 103. I'm sure you have all heard the arguments by now. I don't suppose there's any new argument that you're about to hear or will hear in the future that's novel, but I thought perhaps I could attach myself to a couple that might be attractive.

One is that on all of the arguments about efficiency and lower cost, I identify myself entirely and I'm quite in support of those. But there are two categories that perhaps I could bring some modest insight to. One is the fact that I have adopted this city as my residence for my family and me. Second, having been a former representative over a number of years, I think I can perhaps add a bit of insight to that side of it.

I came here in 1991 as a transplant from London. I haven't had quite Mr Ford's length of time here in my six-year veteran's service, but I did spend 20 years in itinerant service, sort of living like some of you, half in a suitcase and half at home in the city of Toronto, and formed a few views in that period of time.

One of the observations that I think struck me more than anything was when I first arrived here in 1991 and we moved into the city. The first thing I discovered was that there was too much government. It didn't take very much for me to be persuaded that way, but certainly I had the feeling that the municipal government that we had here was forever in our face, so to speak, and that got to me quite a bit. The first opportunity I had, I think like many others, I joined with them in voting against the level of government.

What I like about the amalgamation bill is the fact that this bill will eliminate in effect one government, but do it by amalgamating two sets of governments into one.

The second thing I discovered that was rather mind-opening for me was the fact that this is a city of communities, a community of communities, so to speak. I couldn't get over the fact that the boundaries meant nothing. I live in Rosedale and it didn't mean anything to cross the Governor's Road bridge and go into some other municipality I wouldn't have known I was in. One area — I think it's Mr Parker's area — I wouldn't know it was there had the sign not said we are now in East York. Anyway, crossing over there, it seemed I was in the same place that I had just left and the boundaries seemed to mean absolutely nothing.

The communities mean a great deal, and people seem to live in their communities. They live in their Cabbagetown, they live in Lawrence Park, they live in Swansea. Wherever they may be, it's their community, and it struck me as being the key essence of this great city of Toronto. I was really impressed by the fact that communities meant so much more than something like Scarborough, East York, North York or Toronto proper.

It's a rather interesting comparison. In the United States, of course, they want to know what school you went to. In Montreal they want to know where you spend your weekends, because that categorizes people, and here in Metropolitan Toronto they want to know where you live. You don't tell them Scarborough; you don't tell them Toronto. You say, "Well, I'm in Cabbagetown" or in Rosedale or in Lawrence Park, wherever. So it was rather an interesting discovery on my part.

The second aspect I speak to you from is having been a representative over a number of years. I was a minister for business development portfolios in industry and trade and consumer and commercial relations, and in that, the conclusion that I would draw is that an amalgamated city will generate more jobs. It's the more jobs I think that's a very interesting aspect of it. We will generate more jobs by developing more clout as a city, by becoming a much more efficient city, by becoming a much stronger one so that we will speak with one voice, one great voice, one substantial voice that maybe will win the Olympics the next time, that maybe will win a world's fair, maybe will win these great projects and megaprojects that just create hundreds and thousands of jobs in the process. By having

the one single voice, I feel that we will come together as a unit rather than some seven competing organizations, each one trying to outdo the other and stand upon their turf and all of the problems that flow from that.

On the question of the so-called vote, I really think that's a farce, the vote that's going on at the moment. I can't imagine anything that's more an exercise in futility than what we're seeing. The results will be meaningless. Whatever way they come out, I think they're going to be meaningless. I've never seen anything that's as ludicrous as that. The question put on the ballot is as loaded as you're going to find.

I think sometimes those MPP newsletters that went out are much more scientifically based than what we see on this ballot. I heard today of course that one borough actually has you sign the ballot in an essence of democracy. I think these are the kinds of things that the Royal Canadian Air Farce would make something of, once they have an opportunity to draft some of their skits, this entire process. You can't even get the mayors together on the questions. You can't get the mayors together on the process of it. There are six different approaches that are being taken, six different kinds of balloting. It's ludicrous, and to think that the six mayors or seven mayors would all come together as we thought maybe they could have in the past to support one direction is, I think, not something that's going to happen. Quite frankly, the results should probably be ignored. The fact is that we're going to end up with nothing more than something that gives referendums a bad name. Referendums can be good, and I think this one is a bad way to start the process.

On the question of constituencies being too big, all of you are MPPs representing areas or numbers much greater than any of the constituencies that will exist in Toronto for the councillors. You'll have two councillors in Toronto doing about the same amount of work as perhaps one MPP, so that should make it a little bit easier for them and I don't accept the argument that the constituency size will be far too large for the councillors in this city.

As to the confusion, I think the next day after amalgamation and for many, many months and years thereafter the garbage will still be collected just the same way it was a few days earlier and the fire trucks or the police department will turn up when they're supposed to. There won't be changes in all of that. I don't think there will really be any substantial confusion, but we sure will have a lot fewer politicians around to muddle the pie. We'll certainly have a lot less expense. We'll certainly have more efficiency and we'll certainly have cheaper government all the way around.

I think, quite frankly, it's a wonderful opportunity to create jobs, and I would encourage the committee to support it as much as they possibly can. I'm sure there are some political sides here that will come to the fore, but I really do encourage the committee to report on this bill in total support and encourage the Legislature to pass it as quickly as possible so that we can get on with the job. It's been a lot of years coming to this point, a lot of studies. Now it's time to take action, and I would hope that we all would. Thanks very much.

**Mr Silipo:** Mr Walker, a couple of questions, first around the comments that you made and the comments that you have written in your brief around the lists and some of the problems that have cropped up with the municipal lists and the whole balloting process. You are aware, I'm sure, that the lists that are being used are the responsibility of the province, not the individual municipalities. You will recall that from your days in government, that in fact it's the province that's responsible for setting out the local municipal election lists, not the municipalities.

**Mr Walker:** Oh, I understand that.

**Mr Silipo:** So if there are any problems, it's not the fault of the municipality if they mail, as your brief says, to the wrong people or people who have passed away. They're not the ones we should be looking to blame if we want to blame anybody.

**Mr Walker:** Oh, for gosh sakes, you see hundreds of ballots left in every apartment building. I would have to think that's a bonanza for probably the No group to go around and collect all these ballots up. They probably send trucks around at night and probably got thousands of ballots in support.

**Mr Silipo:** You may not be aware, Mr Walker, that the various procedures that are being used now in terms of alternatives to the traditional way of balloting were adopted and are happening because they were adopted by this government in Bill 86, which was passed just before Christmas.

1740

**Mr Walker:** The basic point is, I don't think this is a question that should ever have been put on a ballot. It's far too complicated a question for that reason. It's the same thing you found up in Thunder Bay in 1968.

**Mr Silipo:** Fine. I accept your position on that, but I just wanted to be clear that you and I understood the same thing with respect to whose responsibility the municipal lists were and that they were not the municipalities' but were indeed the province's responsibility. In fact, you may also know that there were some 17,000 corrections to that list submitted almost two years ago by the city of Toronto alone which have yet to be incorporated into the new voters' lists.

**Mr Walker:** They still managed to have six different approaches when it came to the six different cities.

**Mr Silipo:** They absolutely did, which —

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Silipo. We've run out of time. Thank you very much, Mr Walker, for appearing here before us today.

#### WILLIAM HERRIDGE

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Bill Herridge, please. Good afternoon, Mr Herridge, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr William Herridge:** Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the committee. My name is William Herridge and I live at 20 Edgar Avenue, Toronto. I thank the committee for this opportunity to appear before it to support the principle of Bill 103 and to make some possible suggestions as to the bill's contents.

My wife and I have lived in the city of Toronto since 1957, and I have practised law in the city of Toronto since 1958. However, I should make it clear that my submission is made as an individual citizen and not as a professional lawyer.

I am also a member of the board of directors and am past president of the North Rosedale Ratepayers Association. Regrettably, my submission is most emphatically not made on behalf of this association, as the association's board of directors, by a majority, has voted to oppose Bill 103.

If, and I emphasize if, the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto did not exist, it would make abundant good sense to amalgamate the six municipalities into four and to make the four municipalities of Toronto, Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough a part of a broader greater Toronto area organization. But Metropolitan Toronto does exist, and as I will try to show the committee, the bulk of the important municipal services are already in Metro's hands. It has been my belief for many years that Leslie Frost's great vision for Toronto should be completed by the amalgamation of the municipalities in Metropolitan Toronto, and I urge the committee not to lose this opportunity.

Let me turn to some specifics.

**Water:** The filtration plants, the pumping stations and 450 kilometres of trunk watermains are operated by Metro. Why do we need six different departments to operate the local watermains? In my submission, we do not.

**Sewage:** The sewage treatment plants are in the hands of Metro, and Metro operates 348 kilometres of trunk sewers. Why do we need six different departments to operate the collector sewers? In my submission, we do not.

**Police:** Is there anyone suggesting that we should have four or six different police departments in Metro? If there are such people, I've never met them. The only alternative would be what they have in London, England, where policing is a function of the central government. I don't hear anyone urging that either. It seems to be the general consensus that we have a good police department at present in Metro. While I am an unqualified admirer of the present city of Toronto fire department, I really see no reason why a unified fire department would not also be an excellent one and one with economies of scale.

**Garbage:** Metro operates the landfill sites. I am at a loss to see why we need six different departments to take the garbage to the landfill sites.

**Licensing:** At the present day, we have one metropolitan licensing commission. Is anyone seriously suggesting that we should have separate taxicab licences for Etobicoke and Toronto, or separate plumbing and heating licences for Scarborough and North York? I don't hear anyone advocating this, and if they did, it would be my submission that they make no sense.

**Parks:** I am certain that all members of the committee are familiar with the splendid Metro Parks department. In the spring, if it ever does come, look down University Avenue and see those magnificent flower beds in the median, maintained by Metro Parks. I urge on the com-

mittee that one parks department could operate all the parks in the metropolitan area.

I note, in passing, Metro Toronto's fine support of the performing arts and especially its support of the National Ballet of Canada, which is an organization very dear to my heart.

**Libraries:** At the present day, we have a central Metro Reference Library. I suggest to the committee that substantial economies would be realized if we had one library system for all of Metro.

**Ambulance:** We have a Metro-wide ambulance service. It is my submission to the committee that is the way it should continue to be.

**Conservation and flood control:** Metro Toronto has been the source of the bulk of financial support for the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. In my submission, the MTRCA has done its work well. If Hurricane Hazel were to visit the metropolitan area again, I am confident that the loss of life and property which attended the earlier hurricane would not recur.

And so it goes through the list of municipal services.

What is the fear that is driving the opposition to Bill 103? I recognize the opposition is there, and there with a vengeance. I believe it is driven by fear. In my view, much of this fear relates to the new assessment system and the proposed transfer of various governmental responsibilities between different levels of government. These matters of course have nothing to do with amalgamation, strictly speaking.

But I think there is a further fear. Somehow there is the fear that if Metro is amalgamated, what are now stable, low-density residential areas will become the sites of high-rise developments. In my view, this fear is irrational and without foundation.

Subsection 2(7) of Bill 103 provides that all existing bylaws remain in force. This means that existing official plans, including secondary official plans, remain in force and that all zoning bylaws remain in force. This, in my view, is the effect of subsection 2(7) of Bill 103, although I would suggest to the committee that the wording of this subsection might be strengthened to make this position even clearer.

I would also hope that the formation of neighbourhood committees, pursuant to section 5, might also alleviate these fears. Perhaps section 5 might be amplified and made more specific as to the committees' composition and functions.

In addition, we all know that the final word on planning and zoning matters rests not with municipal councils but with the Ontario Municipal Board. Those protections are in existence today; they will continue in existence after the passage of Bill 103.

Standing back from the bill and looking at it generally, I must say that I would wish to see a greater involvement of the Ontario Municipal Board in the amalgamation process. Both the 1953 act establishing Metro and the 1966 act reducing the number of area municipalities within Metro provided significant roles to the OMB. I suppose we all criticize individual decisions of the OMB — I do, especially when I lose — but I suggest to the committee that over the years the OMB has done its job well and I suggest that some of the powers given the board of

trustees and the transition team might be confided to the Ontario Municipal Board. I believe this course might give greater public confidence to the process.

One further matter I would mention to the committee — and frankly, I don't know the answer and I have had difficulty in finding it out — is what effect the dissolution of the London county council has had on the effectiveness of municipal organization in London, England. It is my understanding that it has been bad. If the committee has the time and the resources, I would urge the committee that this is a matter to which it might give consideration so that mistakes which were made in London are not repeated in Toronto.

In conclusion, I thank the committee for this opportunity to present my views and I urge the committee to proceed with the amalgamation of Metro, which to me represents the long-overdue fulfilment of Leslie Frost's vision. I also respectfully ask the committee to consider the specific points which I have mentioned. Thank you very much.

1750

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** You comment that perhaps the motivation for opposition might come from concern that there will be a development of high-rises. Frankly, I haven't heard that one. What we have heard quite a bit is a concern that if there is amalgamation each individual community might lose its sense of community, that there will be a loss of the distinctiveness of the various communities around the Toronto area. Can you comment on that fear?

**Mr Herridge:** I would, sir. I just wonder to what extent the communities follow the municipal boundaries. Lawrence Park, which is half North York, half Toronto, in my submission is one community. The erasing of the artificial line would benefit the community. I think you could make a strong case that the stable, low-density residential community of north and south Rosedale, Moore Park, Governor's Bridge and the area south of Moore constitute one community. Again you would erase the artificial boundary between East York and Toronto.

In my submission, areas of community do not follow municipal lines. They have grown up independently of them. They may be within municipalities, but if Cabbagetown is a community now in the city of Toronto, I see no reason why it is not a community within the larger Metro.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Herridge, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

#### CAMILLA GEARY-MARTIN

**The Chair:** Will Camilla Geary-Martin please come forward. Good afternoon, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Camilla Geary-Martin:** Good afternoon. Thank you for being here to listen to me this afternoon. My name is Camilla Geary-Martin. First of all, I would like to tell you a little about myself and why I am here today. I feel that I'm a fairly typical Canadian, typical Ontarian. I've been proud of my country, my province, my city, especially at this time when Toronto has been named by Fortune magazine as the most livable city in the world.

I vote in the elections and then I get on with my life. I have four children and I'm extremely busy helping them grow into caring, compassionate, contributing members of our society. I leave the running of government to those elected. In the past this has been relatively effective. I have felt that the governments have done a reasonable job representing me and looking out for the community at large.

A government's first and foremost responsibility is to the people who elect it, to listen to those people, to determine their needs and to meet their needs by passing appropriate legislation.

Lately, however, I have seen shifts in the way the governments have conducted their business, which I have found profoundly disturbing, shifts away from meeting the needs of people to meeting the needs of a large corporate agenda, shifts away from reducing unemployment, improving working conditions, guaranteeing minimum wages, working towards pay equity, protecting the environment, helping those within our communities who have special needs and supporting people through difficult times so they can improve the quality of their lives and become valued contributing members of our society once more.

These shifts become rifts when we end up pitting rich against poor, when welfare recipients are blamed for the demise of our society and governments beg off all responsibility. It sounds rather like the Somalia inquiry, where all the responsibility lies not with the generals but in the hands of the corporals.

When we look to meet the needs of the corporate agenda instead of the needs of people, we see profits as the driving force. Jobs, wages, equity and the environment all are seen as obstacles in the way of progress. When we strive to compete in a global economy controlled by big business, we see fewer workers, lower wages, fewer benefits, longer hours and lower environmental standards as assets.

Like the mother in Mary Poppins, I have been driven to leave the children at home and go out to fight for what I believe in. I, like many other average Canadians, am no longer content to sit and watch governments unravel the fabric of our nation, our province and our cities. I see this country as an incredibly large tapestry, like those that tell the stories of the Bayeux tapestries. Our rich colourful tapestry has been woven over hundreds of years and by generations of Canadians.

The community is important to me. When the needs of the community are not being met, I feel that my needs are not being met. When there are major problems and unrest in the community, we all feel the impact.

At a time of fiscal restraints at all levels of government, we have all felt the pinch. Our local government has worked hard over the past years to deal with cutbacks and to balance its budgets with the minimum effect on the essential services it provides for the people. We have a wonderful, dynamic city here in Toronto. It is not broken. We do not need megacity legislation to fix it.

Specifically, things that are bothering me and upsetting me about this megacity and why I think it should be withdrawn in its entirety:

The background to this Bill 103 was the omnibus bill, which rewrote many of the rules by which we are normally governed.

The bill was announced to the board of trade first, not to the Legislature. This shows contempt of our elected representatives. It's interesting now that the board of trade is speaking out against the bill.

This bill continues this contempt of the people by establishing a board of trustees and a 44-member transition team at great expense to the city. They will have uncontrollable powers to govern, not subject to normal democratic checks and balances. The transition team will be empowered to make new contracts, privatizations and regulations that will be binding on future elected representatives. It has been dictated that the trustees cannot speak to the press. This is all completely unacceptable. Meanwhile, our duly elected councillors will be hog-tied in carrying out the duties they were elected to perform.

The government is refusing to respect the results of the referendum being held. My Toronto includes local democracy.

Amalgamation will not save money as claimed. Even the KPMG report will make no guarantee of cost savings despite the termination of 4,500 jobs. On the contrary, amalgamation will cost us in time, energy and confusion, added to losses in accountability and locally mandated services. The legislation is a recipe for a large American-style city, not the finely tuned Toronto that our mayors and councillors have worked so hard to evolve over the years.

Democracy costs money, and I am willing to pay for a system that is responsive locally and is democratic. The idea of a tier of unelected local committees with no accountability is really frightening. This sounds like China with its central committee and local hacks to me. It only took one Stalin to run the Soviet Union. I certainly don't want that type of efficiency.

The population of the proposed megacity is larger than the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan combined. The new system, with so few councillors for so many constituents, will inevitably lead to expensive election campaigns and party politics at the municipal level — bad news.

Mike Harris has no mandate for change of the horrendous scope proposed in the megacity legislation. The amalgamation format proposed flies in face of the recommendations of all previous studies. Combined with the downloading of social costs proposed in accompanying legislation, it is a real disaster. The board of trade says so. Crombie says so. I say so. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure this out.

This legislation is wrong in motivation, wrong in spirit, wrong in practice. It deserves to be scrapped. I repeat, a government is first and foremost responsible to the people who elect it, to listen to those people, to determine their needs and to meet their needs by passing appropriate legislation. I appeal to you all to vote with your constituents so you can face them with a clean conscience.

Let us get on with discussing what improvements might be needed in Toronto, in a civilized, open fashion such as is our historic experience, and stamp out such

dictatorial tendencies as this legislation implies, before it's too late. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Martin. You've exhausted your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward to the committee to make your presentation.

1800

MICHAEL SHAPCOTT

**The Chair:** Would Michael Shapcott please come forward. Good evening, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Michael Shapcott:** Good afternoon. My name is Michael Shapcott. I'm here today as a concerned father, as a committed co-op housing activist, as an active community member and as a long-time advocate on homelessness and low-income housing. I am here today to say no to megacity. I am here today to say no to the Harris government's plans to shred social housing and other social programs by dumping them on municipalities.

I live in the Windmill Line Housing Co-op in the St Lawrence neighbourhood in the city of Toronto, at the southern end of the St George-St David riding. If I go up on the roof of my co-op I can scarcely see to the very north end of the riding, where my member of provincial Parliament, the Honourable Allan Leach, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, lives in his Rosedale mansion, which I see is estimated to be worth close to \$1 million.

But if I stand up on my roof and look to the east, I can see about three blocks away the abandoned building where the body of Bill Hunta was discovered on February 3. Mr Hunta, who was 74, died cold and homeless within a few metres of a non-profit housing project that was being developed by Dixon Hall. That housing was cancelled by Mr Leach within days of the Harris government coming to office. Mr Leach said the province's taxpayers cannot afford to fund affordable housing for homeless people. I wonder whether Mr Leach believes we can afford Mr Hunta's death, or that of many other homeless people who have died since the Harris government has come to office.

From the rooftop of my co-op I can look to the west and see the Spadina bus loop, where a homeless man, Edmond Wai Hong Yu, was killed by police bullets last Thursday. According to media reports, three police officers confronted this unarmed man on an otherwise empty bus and gunned him down. Instead of the affordable housing and the appropriate services this man needed, he received taxpayer-funded bullets in his head and body. Now the only government service that Mr Yu can expect is a pauper's funeral.

If I continue to look to the southwest I can see the Gardiner Expressway, where the body of a homeless man, Mirsala Aldin Kompani, was found frozen to death a year ago. An inquest jury probing his death and that of two other men last year called on Minister Leach to meet with other levels of government, community groups and the homeless to develop strategies to end homelessness. Mr Leach hasn't even had the courtesy to meet with the Toronto Coalition Against Homelessness, even though coalition members have made four visits to the minister's

office to hand-deliver a request for a meeting. A brand-new set of security doors, which we are told cost \$70,000, now protects the minister from further requests for meetings. Minister Leach makes the shocking assertion that homelessness has nothing to do with his responsibilities as Minister of Housing.

I say no to Bill 103 because I believe in democracy, but I also believe in equity and justice. I say no to Bill 103 because I want to see an end to the suffering and death on the streets of Toronto. And I know it can end. In this city, we have the knowhow and the resources to fund and develop affordable housing and appropriate services that the homeless and low-income people need. While I say no to megacity, I say yes to the city of Toronto working in partnership with the community, and in partnership with the governments of Ontario and Canada, in a concerted campaign to end homelessness in our city.

There has been a lot of talk during the Bill 103 debate about democracy. The critics of Bill 103 have already pointed to the many anti-democratic components of this legislation. I simply want to add that no matter how carefully conceived are the structures of government and the mechanisms of elections, true democracy cannot exist in a radically divided society. The Harris government's housing policies are creating a radically divided Toronto.

In this city's polarized housing market, upper-income households have low interest rates, favourable tax subsidies and a relatively good supply of housing stock. Lower-income households are facing dwindling new supply, deteriorating standards and the promise of huge rent increases once the government guts tenant protection laws. It's all part of the commonsense philosophy of this government to pamper the rich with tax cuts and other taxpayer-funded incentives while the poor are punished and driven onto the streets.

It seems that the Harris government believes that the rich are inherently hardworking and simply need the appropriate tax handouts to encourage them to invest, while the poor are inherently lazy and need to be beaten into submission.

I want to say that I agree with those who say the status quo in Toronto is not acceptable, but I say no to the Harris and Leach scheme of stripping away the structures of democratic local government. We need to concentrate our efforts on ensuring that all members of our society are able to participate in democratic government. We need to focus on the fundamentals: good housing, decent jobs, a fair income and basic equality.

I want to say, especially to the government members of this committee, that there is another course for this government, and it's a path that is tried and true. Instead of gutting local government and then saddling the big, new megacity bureaucracy with a huge set of responsibilities far beyond its ability to fund, your government could accept that the true business of government is governing, governing for all the people, not just the Rosedale neighbours of Minister Leach.

Back on the roof of my co-op, if I look a few blocks to the north I can see to Queen and Parliament and the site of the former Rupert Hotel rooming-house. Back on December 23, 1989, there was a horrific fire that roared

through that building. Ten lives were lost, making it one of the worst blazes in the history of Toronto. The community came together to demand that the dead be remembered. The community pressed the city, and in particular the Toronto fire department, which responded with a campaign to improve fire safety conditions in low-income housing. Fire officials set in place a series of practical initiatives that resulted in immediate improvements. The number of fire deaths has dropped dramatically.

The Rupert Hotel Coalition, a group of community agencies and advocates, worked with city officials and the Ontario Ministry of Housing, as it was then known, in an innovative partnership with private and non-profit landlords to rehabilitate more than 500 units of low-income stock and provide services that homeless people need and want. Both the internal and the independent evaluation of the Rupert pilot project pronounced it a success.

There are plenty of other models of successful housing and services for the homeless. The coroner's jury examining Toronto's homeless deaths last year agreed and urged the provincial government, in partnership with others, to build on these successful models.

Let me repeat: We don't lack the knowledge to end homelessness in our city. We don't lack the ingenuity of committed community organizations. We don't lack the resources. What is missing is a provincial government that is prepared to take up its responsibilities. Instead of tax breaks to the rich, the government should be working with community partners to deliver necessary housing and services to the poor. I call that common decency, something that seems remarkably uncommon these days at Queen's Park.

I say no to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, whose major construction activity in the last 18 months has been new security doors at the minister's office. I say yes to increased partnerships between community and government to end homelessness in Toronto and across Ontario.

I say no to Bill 103 because it takes local government further away from the people of Toronto, especially the poor and homeless people of my neighbourhood. And I say an emphatic no to the downloading of social housing and social programs that is an integral part of this government's agenda.

I challenge Minister Leach and the government members of this committee to serve all constituents, not just the wealthy Rosedale people. I don't know what goes on in your hearts and the hearts of Minister Leach, Premier Harris and others in your government, but when I look at your policies — increased homelessness, increased street deaths, increased hunger, increased misery, increased injustice, increased inequality — I wonder how you and your colleagues can deal with your consciences.

Perhaps you are so committed to your policies that you believe, no matter how many people die, you must stay the course. I want to say to you, I don't admire a government that sticks to its promises as the morgue gets filled to overflowing. I feel horror and repugnance.

On Thursday, I am travelling to Washington to meet with 100 other housing and homeless advocates from across the United States. This special summit, called

Creating Better Futures, is a chance for those of us engaged in the work of building and managing affordable housing to compare notes. We won't, of course, be meeting in Washington proper, because as many of you know, the American capital has a gutted core, the product of years of neglect and abuse by local and national governments. Washington is about the same as most other large US cities, with its inner-city burnt out by the disastrous housing policies of national, state and local governments.

I intend to take careful notes during my visit to Washington because, I am sorry to say, the future of Toronto under the megacity and downloading scheme of this government is US-style decline, increased poverty and misery, run-down housing and increased violence.

Let me end by quoting the words of a Chilean author, Eduardo Galeano. Nine years ago, Galeano was asked to speak on behalf of 300 intellectuals and artists who had formed a group called Chile Creates. In those days, the Chilean government, under General Pinochet, had called for a plebiscite to confirm its rule and was using extensive media advertising to convince people to vote yes on the plebiscite. Galeano delivered a rousing speech on why "we say no." In his speech he said: "As it happens, we are saying no, and by saying no we are saying yes. By saying no to dictatorships, and no to dictatorships disguised as democracies, we are saying yes to the struggle for true democracy, one that will deny no one bread or the power of speech."

That's my submission.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Shapcott. You effectively utilized your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this evening.

1810

#### JOHN PEPALL

**The Chair:** Will Mr John Pepall come forward, please. Welcome.

**Mr John Pepall:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. My name is John Pepall and I live by the St Lawrence Market in downtown Toronto. I've lived there for about 14 years. I've lived all my life in Toronto, in the city of Toronto as it now is, with the exception of four years at university. But I have never known and I don't know today what the boundaries of the city of Toronto are. It is, when you look at a map, a rather muddled-looking shape. On the other hand, I know and have always known roughly what the boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto are.

I love Toronto, but the city or community that I love under that name is not bounded by the official borders of the city of Toronto. It is that community that exists within the boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto. I believe that municipal government should correspond to the real existing communities that have grown up and not be determined by accidental borders that have grown up through history. The boundaries of the area communities within Toronto are by and large accidents of history and they mean nothing to the people who live within them or the people who live along them.

An important aspect of a healthy municipal government is media coverage. The media in Toronto corresponds to Metropolitan Toronto. If anything, they go

beyond it to the greater Toronto area. There's little effective coverage of the affairs of the local municipalities within Metropolitan Toronto, and there is little prospect of that so long as Metropolitan Toronto remains divided among the several existing area municipalities.

Upon amalgamation proceeding, we can hope there will be a clearer focus of public consciousness on the activities of the new city council with an invigorating effect on Toronto's politics, and I would expect an improved voter turnout at elections both this fall and in the years to come.

One of the other problems with the present situation in Toronto is that it is a two-tier government in which the higher tier has, as it were, disappeared over the political horizon while having the larger part of the taxing and spending responsibilities within Metropolitan Toronto.

There is some coverage of what goes on at Toronto city council in our media. There is only occasional coverage of what goes on at Metro council, even though the decisions made there are often among the most important made at the municipal level in Toronto.

I believe it is important that our Metro-level government be brought back to the people, and I believe that by amalgamation we will do that.

Direct election of members to Metro council might have seemed a way of bringing Metro council and local electors together. But once the Metro councillors became purely Metro councillors, they seemed to disappear from our lives altogether. When the senior aldermen, as it used to be, were the Metro councillors from the city of Toronto, people still knew who they were and what they were up to, though I suspect most of that was because of their continuing city responsibilities.

In the future, under an amalgamated city, everybody who is interested in municipal politics will know who their local councillor is, will have ready access to that person and will be able to hold that person accountable for his or her performance in a way that in the present politics of Metropolitan Toronto is almost impossible.

I believe an amalgamated city will bring savings. It certainly should, but it will be up to the new city council to fulfil that promise in their first term, and I would hope that if they fail to fulfil that promise they will be held accountable at the polls in the year 2000.

I have heard nothing to explain the fears that have been expressed that the savings will not be there. You heard in the submission three people before me about the duplication that may be eliminated by amalgamation. These should produce savings.

On the other hand, we've heard of studies that say there's an optimum size for cities, around 500,000 to one million people. I've heard nothing to explain why this should be the optimum size, and the only glimmer of understanding I've received from anything I've read is to suggest that in many amalgamations, what is done is that semideveloped, semirural territory is annexed to a burgeoning city. In Metropolitan Toronto today, we are not bringing together undeveloped or semirural territory with a burgeoning city. All of Metro Toronto is thoroughly developed, perhaps in some cases overdeveloped, and under this bill we are providing a municipal government structure that will provide for the accountable government of that city.

There's been some comment to the effect that local government is better when it is smaller. When one has small communities, that's certainly true, but we have a big community in Toronto and we have too many governments within that community, governments that bear no relation to people's actual sense of community.

The communities in Metropolitan Toronto, as you've heard often in these hearings, I'm sure, are far below the level of even the smallest present municipal governments in East York or the city of York. I don't think anybody would suggest that municipal government could be based on those small communities of perhaps only a few thousand people in an urban community the size of Metropolitan Toronto.

That is not the basis for municipal government, but it can be the basis for participation in municipal government and planning decisions. I'm encouraged by the provision in Bill 103 for the establishment of neighbourhood communities. If this is developed properly, it will regularize, standardize and formalize a form of citizen participation in local government decisions that has been helpful in many cases in Toronto but has too often been haphazard.

I have read the bill and read much about the issues that arise from it. I can see nothing but good in the bill. Unfortunately, some people evidently see it differently. They have made a lot of noise. If they have any valid criticisms to make, they were drowned out by the noise.

After the excitement of the present controversy subsides, I look forward to a new excitement as a great city is reborn within the government it deserves.

I observed earlier that some people asked the committee questions, but I understand the standard procedure is that people who appear are asked questions. I take it either that I've persuaded the committee of the merits of this bill or there might be some questions.

**The Chair:** We sometimes have time left after presentations to ask questions, but unfortunately, you've used your allotted time. I want to thank you, though, for coming forward to make your presentation to the committee this evening.

1820

#### JOYCE MAJOR

**The Chair:** Would Joyce Major please come forward. Good evening, and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Joyce Major:** I am Joyce Major, citizen, and I have never been a card-carrying member of any political party. Getting involved in politics, other than voting, is new to me. My interest started with Bill 26, but Bill 103 really lit my fuse with the timing of its introduction, which was Christmastime 1996, and the autocratic way it was introduced.

We the citizens, not the PC Party, elected our councillors to conduct business on our behalf. Therefore, I consider that Mr Leach has no right to appoint Cy Armstrong, Valerie Gibbons and Jack Pickard as trustees over our elected officials in order to control financial decisions, with full powers to act under Bill 103, even though this bill has not been passed. I deem this to be illegal, undemocratic and not acceptable.

To quote from a Royal Bank letter titled The Prize of Citizenship, the 17th-century English philosopher John Locke was quoted as saying: "The power of the state should always rest with the people. The function of rulers should be restricted to carrying out the people's wishes as expressed by their elected representatives."

Valerie Gibbons has suggested the trustees' pay might be only \$200 a day plus expenses. Therefore, since they are being paid by the citizens of this province, I consider it illegal for them to be above the law and not accountable to the citizens. I find, as many others have, and you still can't hear the message, that the decisions of the board of trustees as final "and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court" a travesty of justice and a sad comment on the state of democracy in this province.

I have two analogies to the introduction of Bill 103. First, the Tories, because they got a majority of seats, behave like the guy who got invited in for a drink after a date and considered that an invitation to rape. Perhaps the argument that you were drunk with power could get you excused.

The second analogy is in the workplace, where the new manager brings in the big broom to prove to the hands that feed him or her that his or her methods of reorganization will increase productivity and produce a higher profit. What really happens is disorganization, stress and a drop in productivity and profits.

We have learned that the arguments put forward for amalgamation — ie, too many politicians; the Tories were elected to create a megacity; there are all sorts of duplications and inefficiencies; taxes will be reduced; councillors only want to protect their jobs; amalgamation saves money — are all false.

I just have to repeat what Mr Harris said in the fall of 1994: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride? I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities."

Lately I have become aware of the high level of media management and one-sided information being sent out by the Tories, using taxpayers' dollars, which only adds to the perception that a lot of politicians are self-serving liars. This type of media management adds to the mistrust of all politicians. How many people are aware of the Internet poll, knowing of course that most computers are in the hands of business and the well-to-do? This poll, I'm told, not only allowed people outside of Canada to take part but was even directed to Republicans in the United States.

The introduction of Bill 103 has become a looking-glass through which we see the far-reaching goals of the Tories. I think about the takeover of Alberta, which now has an increase in its budget surplus due in part to the 5% cut to the salaries of its civil servants for the past three years. Many of these civil servants were teachers and nurses. Wouldn't it be interesting to find out what percentage of those affected were women? Now the Tories in Ontario want to import Mr Klein's Tory format and do to Toronto what they did to Alberta, and I bet, after sucking out the wealth and the caring spirit of

Ontario, move on to attack the NDP government of Mr Clark in British Columbia.

It is becoming increasingly obvious to me that the power of the state is being taken over by corporations. They are able to control what you read and see and seem to want to carry out not the people's wishes but the corporate agenda. We must be aware of where we are heading. I think our corporate leaders', ie, Tories', intention of getting on the globalization bandwagon sell our people and the protection of our environment down the drain.

Some believe Bill 103 is a diversionary tactic, the real goal being the downloading of soft services while the government pays for education. The Tories claim it would be a wash. It looks to me like it would be Tories washing their hands of all the soft services they don't approve of, mainly welfare and social services. They think that when push comes to shove, ratepayers will want social services to be cut or dropped before accepting a tax increase. That way, the Tories will have accomplished their objective, while saying they aren't responsible.

Again, I see women as one of the Tories' big targets. I have the impression they think women should stay at home unpaid to do day care, volunteer at schools, look after the elderly and the things that are being kicked out of hospitals. The Tories will also make it possible, if you were beaten by your partner, to get back home in 48 hours so that maybe you can be killed the next time.

I find it worrisome that big dollars can be spent on Tory-directed reports, such as the McGuire one, the Todd, the Lampert, the Golden, the Trimmer, the Crombie, the KPMG. Now a United States firm, Andersen Consulting, is to be paid \$180 million of taxpayers' money over the next six years to show the government how to save money in the management of the welfare system. We all know what "management" means, don't we? Why not just buy a branding iron to put a mark on the foreheads of all the undesirables?

Why is it that seniors are now paying more for transit and Wheel-Trans users a fee, when retired TTC executives are being kept on the payroll for life at an annual cost to the taxpayers of \$125,000? Honourable, don't you think?

Perhaps this attack on the most vulnerable is the reason they've spent \$77,179.24 of taxpayers' money — perhaps it came out of the cuts to welfare — to secure several floors and fortify the front doors at 777 Bay Street against the citizens who pay the bills. Maybe doing things in secret behind locked doors that impact so negatively on a lot of powerless people leads to this kind of seige mentality.

In regard to amalgamation, would Mr Leach have his house redecorated without consulting his wife? But he doesn't have a problem with messing up other people's lives without consultation or considering the best interests of the people involved.

My two questions are, first, why the big rush? Is it, as Scarborough mayor Mr Faubert suggested, "to neutralize Toronto's political opposition to the Tories"? Second, why wasn't an open transitional team of laypeople, our legal representatives and Tory ministers set up first, to take the necessary time, two or three years if necessary,

to work through the changes needed that best reflect the needs of the people? I'm not speaking about business here. I repeat: the needs of the people.

I quote from one of Tom Harpur's columns, where he said, "We all walk with a limp." I would like to add, if he didn't, that some of us limp more than others. Even though corporate thinking is that if you make your bed, you can lie in it, that doesn't reflect the view we have of ourselves as caring deeply for all our citizens. I don't see Bill 103, 104 etc doing that.

My suggestions are, don't try to sweeten the pot with offers that can be manipulated or changed. You have lost credibility with me. Instead of trying to save face with your corporate handlers or Mr Klein, please withdraw Bill 103 and keep the faith with the people. If you're not prepared to do that, then my suggestion to your moral and decent backbenchers is that if you can't take a much-needed vacation at the right time, be prepared to be true to yourselves. Stand up when the time comes and do the walk. It will feel good. If I can find the courage to come here and do this, then you can find the courage too.

If anybody here thinks that big is better, consider the population of Bombay; a supertanker's ability to pollute; larger aircraft using more fuel and reducing comfort and services; high-rise apartments with diminished safety and quality of life; a 20-room house housing three people and wasting fuel, space and goods.

I consider that Bill 103 will cause harm, as it is ill-conceived and dictatorial.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Major. You've effectively exhausted all your allotted time. I thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this evening.

*The committee recessed from 1830 to 1909.*

#### LESLIE YAGER

**The Chair:** Could I have Leslie Yager, please. Good evening. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Leslie Yager:** My name is Leslie Yager. I'm a lawyer, and I work in the real estate and development field. I have lived in the city of Toronto for the past 27 years and I'm here tonight to speak against the passage of Bill 103.

The current system of local governance that we have in the city of Toronto is small and very community oriented. As a result, in my opinion this makes the city of Toronto an excellent place in which to live and work.

Currently, the Walt Disney Co is in the process of opening a 60,000-square-foot animation studio at the corner of Dundas and University. I believe it's one of the few studios they will be operating outside their home base in California.

Why are they here? For years, Disney has been heavily recruiting among the graduates of Sheridan College for computer animators. Recently, however, Disney has found that these bright young graduates have not been keen to move to Los Angeles, despite the glamour and prestige of working for Disney. They want to stay in Toronto because it's a good place to live and work. As a result, the mountain has come to Muhammad and Disney has opened a studio here to take advantage of our young

Canadian talent. This brings prestige to our city and stimulates the economy.

Our city council has historically been able to keep our city alive and vibrant through a concerted effort to keep the city core a good place to live and work. When David Crombie was mayor he showed incredible foresight in his efforts to encourage people to live in the downtown core, starting with the redevelopment of the St Lawrence neighbourhood. As a result, our downtown core has never become an unsafe, deserted wasteland like many other downtown areas in North America.

Recently, Mayor Hall initiated a zoning initiative that allows industrial properties to be converted to live-work spaces. It is as a result of this initiative that I have my job today, as my company specializes in these conversions. The units are flying off the market and we're having a hard time finding enough properties to convert. This type of initiative costs very little money, yet brings tremendous economic benefits to our city and ultimately to the province as a whole.

In my opinion, Toronto will continue to be a successful city because it is small, locally governed and responsive to the needs of the people. But, you will ask me, why won't these things happen in a megacity? Based on my own experience, it won't.

I'm a member of the Yonge Street Business and Residents Association, a group formed two years ago to improve downtown Yonge Street. We have an eclectic mix of small and large business operators, such as the Eaton Centre, the Cadillac Fairview Corp, the Senator Restaurant and Barberian's.

Two years ago, we approached both our city and our Metro representative with our list of concerns, among them being policing, safety, the appearance of the street and the lack of good quality retailers on Yonge Street.

The response from the Metro government, which in many ways is similar to the proposed megacity, was almost nil. The response, however, from the city level of government has been fantastic.

In the two-year time period, we've had the city initiate a façade improvement program where over a million dollars of storefront renovations have been started based on about \$166,000 in city tax grants. Significant improvements have been made in garbage pickup and street cleaning. Even more important, the city is partnering with our committee in a mega-project centring on the corner of Yonge and Dundas called the Yonge-Dundas rejuvenation project.

This project, which is subject to provincial approval, and I hope you'll all vote for it, will see the creation of a public plaza at Dundas and Yonge and the creation of valuable development lots for retail, entertainment and hotel uses.

Already our group has received expressions of interest from at least half a dozen major development companies from around the world that want to participate in this project.

These kinds of initiatives are good for the city and good for the economy, and I believe the economy of the province is tied very closely to the economy of the city.

Under a megacity these kind of initiatives just won't happen, to the detriment of all of us, and I'm asking you,

therefore, please kill this bill. If the bill is going forward in some form, I would however ask you to seriously consider deleting section 16 relating to the transition team.

First of all, I believe it's patently wrong to allow decisions such as are contemplated by section 16 to be made by non-elected officials. To date, the minister has not named one member to the transition team, nor has he given us any indication of how large a group it will be, yet this team has incredible powers, including the right to set budgets for the new megacity for any year in the future, not just 1997 or 1998 but the legislation speaks in section 4(b) of any year in the future.

We are going to have a municipal election in about nine months. I believe the candidates should be given the opportunity to tell us how they would run the megacity and we can therefore cast our votes accordingly. If the transition team is put into place and carries out its mandate under the bill, then the new 44 members of the megacity council will be mere puppets, reduced to the role of administrators only.

Another function of the transition team is to hold hearings on the role of community councils. While I don't have much information about what this proposal entails, what has been published in the papers is striking fear in the heart of all real estate developers. The current system is open and provides a fair give-and-take between community interests and the wants of the development community. Real estate is just starting a comeback now. Throwing uncertainty into the planning process will be counterproductive. Please, if you have to pass the bill, take out section 16.

**Mr Sergio:** Thanks for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. We have a couple of questions. We, the opposition, have been accused of trying to muddle the issue here by putting the downloading issue together with the megacity issue. We believe there is a connection there. We believe the two of them are connected. How do you see it from a citizen's point of view?

**Ms Yager:** I see there's a connection between the two things. Do you mean a political connection?

**Mr Sergio:** That too, a political connection as well, but I think physical, monetary, financial, and for the good of our province and especially for the core.

Let me ask another question: Even the Premier said he wants to maintain a very strong core, a very strong city. Do you believe — and I just caught the tail-end of your presentation; you're dealing with real estate and stuff like that — it is possible to maintain that when the tax reform that is proposed by the government does not take into consideration the inequity that exists between the GTA, the regions and Metro?

**Ms Yager:** I think it's a major weakness of the reform that hasn't been addressed. Another comment I've heard from people in real estate and development, some of whom kind of favour the megacity, is it's just too much happening at once: property tax reform, school trustees, the megacity. It's scaring people to death because when you're a real estate developer you're looking into the future. You have a two-year time span — buy the property, develop it and get out — and they don't know what's going to happen, what the rules are.

Speaking about welfare, in my office a couple of people are from New York City. When that downloading was announced, one guy said: "That's it. I'm moving to Uxbridge." They just think Toronto will become like New York.

**Mr Sergio:** Perhaps we're moving too quickly; this is what we heard from many deputations. What do you think the government should be doing at this stage, just recall the bill, have more public hearings, go back to the studies that have been done — Crombie, Golden, whatever — have more consultation and come up with something else?

**Ms Yager:** I think one of the great weaknesses in the way the government has been proceeding is they haven't accurately defined what the problem is they want to fix. I would love to see the bill withdrawn, but if not, I'd love to see a more gradual form, perhaps amalgamating into four cities and setting benchmarks then as to what the government wants the four municipalities to accomplish. I believe Mayor Hall has said all along, "Tell us what the benchmark is and let us accomplish it." They talk about efficiency but there's no definition. What? Dollars? People? Manpower?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Yager, for coming forward and making your presentation.

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#### ETOBICOKE TAKES A STAND

**The Chair:** Would Barbara Seed and Dave Angove please come forward. Good evening and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Barbara Seed:** Dave and I are presenting a submission on behalf of an organization called Etobicoke Takes a Stand. Etobicoke Takes a Stand is a city-based organization that came into being in September 1996. It brought together individuals from a broad range of organizations, as well as unorganized individuals, to mobilize people in the city of Etobicoke to participate in the Metro Days of Action, which culminated with the October 25 shutdown of Metro Toronto and the October 26 rally at Queen's Park. We saw hundreds of thousands of people voice their opposition to the anti-social offensive of the Ontario government. It has since continued to work on this front.

Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, is being justified under the various elements of the Common Sense Revolution. In particular, it is being justified as a measure that will fulfil the government's aim of eliminating red tape, government waste and duplication, and generally having less government. Bill 103 has been presented as a reorganization which will yield savings and contribute to the aim of eliminating the deficit. Bill 26, the Savings and Restructuring Act, provided the legislative framework for the current measures.

Etobicoke Takes a Stand poses the question, savings for whom? The claim of savings is an untenable one. This is because, as far as we have seen, the government has not yet presented the costs of running the society in such a manner that the needs of the people in Metro Toronto are met.

In order to show that some restructuring will save money, the government must first establish what the needs of the people are. Determining how they will be provided and how much it will cost will follow. Comparisons can then be made of the various ways of doing this. What is the cost of delivering education, health care, culture and social security to the people? Saying how much was spent last year will not answer this question.

When the government speaks of saving, what we have seen is a shifting of various costs directly on to the people, as has been done through the hundreds of user fees that have been introduced over the past 18 months and a discernible deterioration in the quality and quantity of services provided. Savings, in terms of this government, also translate into thousands of public sector workers being forced into unemployment or forced to accept wages that have been driven down by the pressures of privatization.

Just to further illustrate this point, the government is speaking of being able to save money by bringing the per pupil cost of education down to the national average, without clearly presenting what are the actual costs of providing education at a socially determined level in Ontario.

The government also argues that if certain services can best be delivered by the private sector, then the government should withdraw from these areas and this will amount to a savings, but what savings are being achieved when the privatization of public services and public resources places a retrogressive pressure on the society because it imposes an increased burden on individuals?

By no definition of the word can it be said that privatization will lead to savings. It will certainly lead to the companies which serve the lucrative 2.3 million people-strong markets for utilities, health care, and so on reaping profits as they take over the assets that have been developed through public resources, and they make individuals pay more. Already we have seen the privatization of ambulance operations in several small cities in central and eastern Ontario.

Thus the municipal amalgamation and its aim of facilitating the privatization of various government services and public resources will not produce savings. The increased prices which individuals, directly or through government funding, will pay for privatized services will be harmful, both for the individual and for the society in general, as more and more money is taken out of the economy through privatization of public resources and services.

If reform is needed in the sphere of municipal government, the starting point has to be the needs of the people. The absence of this starting point is the deep flaw in Bill 103 and the reason it has generated such broad opposition. This starting point, when applied to government restructuring, would necessarily lead to addressing the need of the people to participate in the decision-making process.

Far from the proposed reforms, which will lead to the creation of a powerful 44-person council that will rule over 2.3 million people and abolish the councils in each city, what is needed is the broadening of local government through the creation of people's councils.

More power needs to be put into the hands of the people and all the mechanisms should be put in place for them to exercise control over their own lives and their own communities. This would mean that instead of preparing the conditions and legislation for privatizing public services and public resources such as water, electricity and so on, the reforms should go in the direction of placing these public assets more and more in the control of the people.

The definition of bureaucracy and inefficiency and duplication and waste only has its meaning in relation to the aim of the organization at hand. If it is to be accepted that the aim of government is to represent and serve its constituents to ensure their wellbeing and the fulfilment of their needs, then bureaucracy and inefficiency and waste are all those things that obstruct the aim of providing for the needs of the people. By making it more difficult for people to participate in the decision-making process, by further centralizing and concentrating power in the hands of a few, by putting more and more socially necessary services into the hands of the private sector, the Ontario government is proposing to take us in the opposite direction of what is needed for the society.

Etobicoke Takes a Stand would make the following two recommendations in conclusion: (1) enhancement of the people's participation in local government through the strengthening and extension of people's councils; (2) extension of the scope and sphere of public services and placing them under the control of people's councils. These two reforms will be the surest steps towards the elimination of red tape, bureaucracy, government duplication, waste and overspending.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We have several minutes for questions. Mr Silipo.

**Mr Silipo:** If you want to split that time, Mr Chair, I'm more than fine with that. I'll leave it to your judgement.

**The Chair:** Okay. What about two and a half minutes per caucus?

**Mr Silipo:** Sure.

Thank you very much for the presentation. I just want to pick up on your recommendations and ask you to expand a little bit on that because some government members, reading this, might say, "Well, that doesn't sound too different than the local councils" that they envision, the local community councils. I think you're talking about something quite different, but I'd like to ask if you could expand on that a little bit more.

**Ms Seed:** Yes, we are talking about something very different. The problem we've been confronting in our organization, and in many of the organizations that have been established in the last few years to oppose the anti-social programs that have been inflicted on the people of Ontario, is that the people of Ontario are essentially powerless. We elect a government, whatever political stripe it may have, and then we're asked to sit back and wait and simply accept whatever is handed down to us. This happens at the federal level, at the provincial level and at the municipal level, and we can't see that there are any solutions to the problems that are facing the people in Ontario that exclude the people themselves from participating in solving those problems.

The reforms that are being proposed at the present time further marginalize all the citizens of Ontario from participating in government. The changes that are needed in our society to enhance and improve the democracy that we have are changes that will go in the way of putting more power in the hands of the people. All that we see in the proposed legislation is going in the opposite direction.

We in Etobicoke Takes a Stand, and I can speak on behalf of many other organizations that have come into being in the same way as we have and are fighting for the same things, believe the people of Ontario have great capacity to solve the problems confronting them if they have the power to do so.

**Mr Silipo:** One of the arguments I've heard government members make is that this is a government that was democratically elected. They feel that somehow they have a mandate to bring about these changes. They're bringing it about through a democratic process of introducing the bill, even allowing committee hearings etc, and hence the whole thing is democratic. They say they can't understand why some people are calling this measure and the whole process anti-democratic. I wonder if you could comment on that as well.

**Ms Seed:** What we see is that this is democracy in crisis. If democracy, which is supposed to mean power in the hands of the people, puts into power a government which flouts the will of the people, and I'm not just speaking about the present government in Ontario but about the federal government and provincial governments right across the country who are flouting the will of the people repeatedly, then there's a very serious problem in that democracy, which is why our proposal goes to the heart of the matter.

We are proposing that the questions of governance at the municipal level should be in the hands of people's councils, where people can be elected by their peers, where they don't come to power and represent political parties but actually represent the citizens of the city, where there's accountability, where there are all the means by which people can exercise power and they are not relegated to simply being voting machines every four or five years.

**1930**

**Mr Parker:** I want to follow up on Mr Silipo's first question because I'm not sure you had a chance to give a full answer to it. I'm intrigued by your recommendation of people's councils, but I'd like you to give some greater definition to what you mean by it. I'd like to know how the members would be chosen, how the group would be constituted, specifically how it would operate and what sort of authorities it would have in your model.

**Ms Seed:** It's very interesting that people who are elected to govern the province don't have a concept of what it means for the people themselves to exercise power, which is precisely the problem we want to address. We have a very difficult time with the concept of a democracy in which candidates are selected by political parties. They do not necessarily have any contact with the constituents they purport to represent —

**Mr Parker:** I appreciate your concern and your dissatisfaction with the present system, but I'm interested in knowing a little bit more about what you propose as a replacement.

**Ms Seed:** What we propose is a mechanism which we ourselves can establish over the course of time. Our problem is that we are obstructed from doing that.

**Mr Parker:** Who is "we"?

**Ms Seed:** We, the people. Dave is a trade unionist. I work in an establishment in Etobicoke. We have in our organization seniors. We have people on welfare. All of them are rendered powerless by the situation that exists at present.

**Mr Parker:** Let's say you have the time that's required to develop the system you have in mind. What's it going to look like?

**Ms Seed:** The essential elements of what it will look like are that people who are nominated to stand for election will be people who are chosen from among the electors, who are known to the electors, who will represent them, who will be accountable to them, who will not be beholden to political parties but will be elected on the basis of implementing a program which addresses the needs of the people of Ontario. For example, right now we have a presentation —

**The Chair:** Sorry for interrupting. Unless Mr Crozier wants to use his two and a half minutes for the example, I have to interrupt and go to Mr Crozier's time.

**Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex South):** Not really, no, although it's along the same line. What then would prevent you, in forming these councils, from running outside of the political party system?

**Ms Seed:** Nothing prevents me from running except economic inability to do so, except the control of the entire apparatus of the media and all the organization required to run a campaign and to get elected being in the hands of the richest and the most powerful people in the country. Ordinary citizens in Canada do not have the means to exercise that right that formally exists to elect and be elected, and you sitting here know that better than I do.

**Mr Crozier:** Let me give you an example. I come from small urban and rural Ontario. When I decided to run for office, I did in fact select a party or I belonged to a party. But when it comes to the resources that you're talking about, I raised my own money; the party didn't give me any money. I got my own workers; the party didn't give me any workers. I went out and got friends and relatives and those who felt that I would be a good representative. Why can't you do that?

**Ms Seed:** If you run on the basis of fulfilling the needs of the vast majority of the people and making sure that the most vulnerable people in the society are protected, then your constituency is going to be the most vulnerable people in the society. Do you think they have the means to go up against the Liberal machine, the NDP machine, the Conservative machine, the media?

**Mr Crozier:** Yes, I do. All they have to do is vote for you.

**The Chair:** Thank you for coming forward and making a presentation today.

#### OLDER WOMEN'S NETWORK

**The Chair:** Would Grace Buller please come forward. Good evening and welcome to the committee. Before you

begin, could you introduce yourselves for the benefit of Hansard.

**Ms Grace Buller:** This is Ethel Meade, who is the chair of our health issues committee, and this is Eileen Smith, who is chair of our housing committee of the Older Women's Network.

The Older Women's Network is an organization of approximately 400 women. Their objective is to work to overcome injustices and inequities for older women in the home, in the workplace and in society at large.

The Older Women's Network is opposed to amalgamation. In Bill 103, the electoral boundaries are changed drastically by creating 44 wards out of 22 ridings which were originally devised for effective representation at the federal level. This change will seriously weaken local democracy.

Historically, the local voter has been able to change politicians' minds, especially when political actions may affect local wellbeing. Witness the local citizens' stopping of the Spadina Expressway. Toronto has become one of the few livable cities in the world due to efforts of local citizenry in response to bureaucratic and harmful officialdom. The preservation of neighbourhoods is a high priority with most citizens and will not be possible without local political representation. No large urban centre has a viable, productive central core. Look at New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Mexico City and Cairo.

Arbitrary legislation appointing trustees who bypass elected representatives is harmful to the democratic concept and works against the wellbeing of all who live in Metro Toronto.

In addition to subverting political democracy, the government is placing the costs of health and social services on the backs of homeowners and tenants. Half of the costs of welfare, child care, nursing homes, homes for the aged, in-home nursing care and housekeeping services, as well as 100% of the costs of social housing, public health, ambulance services and homes providing special care, will now be downloaded on to municipalities.

There is a danger of privatization if the costs of nursing homes and homes for the aged are downloaded to the municipalities. If this happens, the quality of services provided will substantially deteriorate. The Older Women's Network is opposed to downloading these services to the municipalities. People are living longer, and to preserve their dignity and sense of wellbeing, we want to ensure that there is quality long-term care.

The government's projections are that demands for these services will increase 50% in the next four years. Downloading the costs of these services to the municipalities will cause a serious shortage of funds and a lack of services.

Downloading 100% of social housing on to municipalities will cause untold hardship. Many older people, especially women, live in social housing. Those municipalities with considerable social housing, such as Metro, would be affected to such an extent that their tax base could not carry the burden. These services must be maintained as a provincial responsibility. Municipalities will not be able to fund the costs of these services. The result will be either lowered standards or tax increases, and probably both of these.

The megacity proposal was not a part of the Common Sense Revolution election platform. On the contrary, speaking to a group of municipal officials in Fergus, Ontario, in 1994, then leader Mike Harris made the following statement: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride? I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities."

#### Why the turnaround in Bill 103?

The Older Women's Network recommends: (1) withdraw Bill 103 in the interests of municipal democracy and proper local representation; (2) restore full funding to all social programs and do not offload these costs to the municipalities; (3) abandon the 30% tax cut and use the revenue to fund the vital social programs which the municipalities administer.

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**Ms Ethel Meade:** Good evening. I just want to take a minute to re-emphasize one of the points that Grace has mentioned in her presentation, and that is the inevitable increase in the costs of long-term care. This has received very little attention in the discussions about downloading. I want to say very strongly that it is extremely threatening to people my age, to all the members of Older Women's Network, to anybody who is past 60, I would say, to think that municipalities are going to be asked to pay 50% of a cost that is going to increase and continue to increase for decades to come.

It's going to increase because people continue to live longer. There is a larger percentage of the population in the older age brackets today. It keeps increasing and it's going to increase because hospital restructuring is pushing post-acute care into the community. It means that people are discharged from acute care hospitals when they are still sick. The community services are expected to pick up this burden and they are being pushed extremely hard even now before any hospitals have been closed.

The home care services are having a very difficult time to keep up with the load that's being forced on them. They do keep up by spreading their resources thinner and thinner, and we have a situation where there's going to be competition between the needs of people coming out of hospital and the needs of the frail elderly who need more simple services. If there isn't enough money to go around, it perhaps will go to the people who are sick, but that will be at the expense of people who are maintaining themselves in their own homes only because they can get some service in the home that makes that possible.

All of this points to a steady increase in costs of long-term care, and a service that is being steadily increased to be loaded on to municipal budgets is a recipe for disaster. We do hope that this government will see fit to rethink this idea because it really needs rethinking.

**Ms Eileen Smith:** I hadn't planned on saying anything very much, but I wanted to point out that in Metro itself there are 100,000 subsidized rental units in the downtown core. The cost of this is \$365 million to \$370 million a year. In addition to this, each municipality will now have to set up its own administration for social housing, which is an additional burden on the municipality.

In the Metro area, all the buildings of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority are over 20 years old. They haven't built anything new since 1975. Now these are all in very bad condition and it's estimated that it will take \$240 million to bring the housing up to standard. This is a burden on the municipalities that they simply cannot assume because they have no way of raising money other than direct taxation.

It is an increasing burden because there are more and more people requiring subsidized housing and it will simply be extremely difficult for them to keep up the pace.

**Mrs Munro:** Thank you very much for coming here this evening to give us your views. I want to come back to a sentence in the first page of your presentation where you said "The preservation of neighbourhoods is a high priority with most citizens." Certainly in the course of these hearings that is something we've heard over and over again.

I think it's important to see that when you look at the whole history of Toronto, it is a history of expansion. It seems that, regardless of the political configurations we've gone through over the almost 200 years of Toronto history, we have been able to maintain the identity of those communities, of those neighbourhoods. I just wondered if you could tell me why you think this bill poses a threat to the preservation of neighbourhoods.

**Ms Buller:** In replying to that, I would like to quote from Boom, Bust and Echo. This book has been on the bestseller list for about 10 weeks, maybe more than that. It refers to a particular study done by the Corporate Resources Group, an international personnel consulting company based in Geneva. It ranked 118 cities, with 42 measures of quality of life, and Canada was the only country with more than three cities in the top 20. Boston was the 30th. He goes on to say:

"Why do Canadian cities rank so high? Because they are small big cities rather than big big cities. All the cities near the top of the livability list are small big cities like Montreal, Vienna and Auckland. Big big cities like New York, Tokyo and Mexico City are near the bottom."

He says that the major cities do so well because "they are big enough to be lively and interesting and yet small enough to avoid the severe congestion, pollution and general unmanageability associated with the world's biggest urban centres."

Another reason he gives, the second reason, is that: "Canada's biggest cities still have healthy downtowns. It is not the suburbs that distinguish Toronto from Detroit, a once-great American city that became a symbol of urban decay. Detroit's suburbs are as handsome and livable as those of Toronto."

But the core of that city is despoiled and the core of every American city is in disrepair, and there's misery in every core of every city. This is what we want to avoid in the city of Toronto and in Scarborough and in North York, York and Etobicoke.

**Mrs Munro:** My question is simply that creating the community councils in this bill would address a lot of the concerns of people within a community. As well, these neighbourhoods that we are all conscious of have survived all these other political reconfigurations.

**Mr Parker:** I notice you quote Mike Harris's remark in the Fergus paper, and we've heard a lot of that. Using that quote in this context reflects a misunderstanding that has pervaded a number of presentations, so I just want to touch on it. In that case, in the Fergus quote, Mr Harris was referring to a potential amalgamation of then hitherto unrelated municipalities; the speculation at the time was that they might be brought together for the first time.

That's not what we're talking about in Bill 103. In Bill 103 we're talking about a municipality that is already in place. The 2.3 million people are already here. They are currently under an amalgamated government of sorts with Metro government, and the Metro level of government spends more than half of the municipal tax dollars, more than half of the municipal spending across the Metro area right now. But we have a subdivision of responsibilities between the Metro level and six local levels, and it's dealing with that reality that Bill 103 is directed at.

The question is, given that the 2.3 million people are already here and are not going to go away, what is the best structure we can come up with to deal with that current reality? At present, there is a vast —

**The Chair:** Mr Parker, could you end up quickly?

**Mr Parker:** I'll just wrap up my point quickly. There is a strong body of thought that the two-layer system we have now has outlived its usefulness and it's time to look at something new. Many recommendations have come forward that it's time to go for a single level, and that's what Bill 103 is addressing.

**The Chair:** Thank you, ladies, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this evening.

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### TREVOR ELLIS

**The Chair:** Would Trevor Ellis please come forward. Good evening, Mr Ellis. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Trevor Ellis:** My name is Trevor Ellis, and I've been a resident of Toronto for about 10 years. I'm here tonight to give you my views about the proposed amalgamation. The views I'm about to give have been shaped by what I've read in the media and heard on TV and also by talking to people, getting their sense of what they feel about the amalgamation, also going to a couple of amalgamation debates. Of all the viewpoints I've been able to gather, one common theme that goes through all of them is that there is a need for change, and the contention really arises over the process and the timing and the shape of that change.

Both the municipal and Metro governments agree that there are some financial savings to be had from some form of consolidation. Consolidation estimates vary from a minimum of \$135 million from the mayors' proposal to a minimum of \$187 million from Metro's proposal. In addition, the annual savings on top of these consolidation savings range from a minimum of \$50 million in the mayors' proposal up to \$300 million, as mentioned in the KPMG study. Of course, no one knows what the exact figures will be. However, whatever the source of the estimates, there's an indication that amalgamation will result in substantial cost savings.

The mayors and Metro are to be commended for coming up with alternatives to Bill 103, but my only question to them is, why did these alternatives take so long?

I believe the answer lies in the political paralysis that I think has affected our political process for a long time. Up until the present provincial government, there's not really been the political will to make tough decisions. We finally have a government that's willing to govern, not necessarily with a viewpoint to a future election but with a view to making decisions that make sense. In my view, amalgamation makes sense.

That being said, there are some valid concerns about Bill 103. Presently, many people are concerned about the mandate and the authority of the board of trustees. The role of the trustees is to oversee the major financial decisions made by the municipal governments. To me, it only seems prudent to have a team of financial professionals looking out for all the residents of the new city. If individual municipalities make major financial decisions in the next year without looking at the effect outside their own municipality, that's where the board of trustees will be most helpful. The broad authority of the board makes an open decision process all the more important.

People have every right to express their concern, and I think a forum such as this is a great way for the government to take in opposing viewpoints and make sure it does govern on behalf of all the citizens of this province.

The amalgamation process is not going to happen overnight. But the earlier we get a start on this process, the smoother the transition will be to the new city.

The transition team will be appointed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, but I think it needs to have an open and inclusive consultation process, a process that keeps it in touch with the pulse of our community. Also, improving the transparency of its decision-making processes and making it more accountable to the new city will go a long way in reducing the opposition to this body.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs has spoken publicly about reserve funds. I was at an amalgamation meeting last week where he stated that the assets and liabilities of the old municipalities will become the assets and liabilities of the new council. For me, that's the end of the story in terms of reserve funds. But there are definitely concerns about reserve funds, and maybe a way to address these concerns is to enshrine these public comments into the legislation.

The opponents of amalgamation have announced the death of local democracy with the introduction of Bill 103. I think the people who have spoken here today and the people who have attended many of the amalgamation meetings are proof positive that Ontarians are willing to actively participate in the democratic process. Democracy is alive and well, and I think it will continue in the form of the neighbourhood councils. What better way to encourage active participation in the community than through the neighbourhood councils? I believe democracy will be lost if citizens miss the opportunity the councils present. Elected councillors will be able to receive direct input from their constituents. That, to me, is democracy in action.

As a resident of Toronto, I've come to appreciate what makes Toronto special. The mix of cultures, languages and neighbourhoods is really a source of strength, and a new Toronto will give a legal name to a city that is already in existence. Whether you live in Scarborough, North York or Etobicoke, you feel a part of Metropolitan Toronto.

After amalgamation, the people living within the new Toronto will be the same. The physical location of unique areas and communities will still be the same. It is the people in the community who really create the atmosphere and the character of a community.

Amalgamation is about change, and change is essential to the continuing quality of life we have come to enjoy in Metropolitan Toronto. But one thing I've noticed is absent from this discussion about the amalgamation is the element of trust. I think we have to start trusting our elected politicians. For far too long citizens have had a cynical, sceptical view of politicians because they have often promised much and delivered little.

What we are seeing now with this government is that our politicians are doing what they said they would do. Reducing the size of government is not popular, especially among people who will be directly affected, and I'm thinking of the municipal politicians. It's not popular among groups who feel they will lose their special access to municipal politicians.

Difficult decisions are not always popular but I feel they have to be made. I'd like to commend this government for moving forward in trying to create a better future for us all.

**Mr Sergio:** Mr Ellis, thank you for making a very interesting presentation to our committee here. Normally, when a government makes changes, some new proposal, some new legislation, you would think that is done keeping in mind the benefit to the taxpayers, right?

**Mr Ellis:** Yes.

**Mr Sergio:** Do you think this bill, the way it's presented, would benefit the average taxpayer?

**Mr Ellis:** I think it will. As I mentioned earlier in my presentation, both the mayors and Metro agree there are savings to be had and those savings will of course assist the property owners and the taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto.

**Mr Sergio:** You mentioned that democracy is alive and well. Others before you said democracy is in crisis. Why would you say that democracy is alive and well and others say the opposite? Do you think it's because of the process?

**Mr Ellis:** From my standpoint, the fact that we have an open forum like this and amalgamation debates indicates to me that people have an outlet for what they would like to say, and the fact that we can have amendments to the bill means there's a way for them to influence.

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**Mr Sergio:** If we're going to have amendments that will make a difference, that's another story. You're right, we could, but whether that is going to happen is another story. We have no information with respect to these supposed savings, that this bill is going to save money and reduce taxes. I don't have any information; we don't

have any information as a committee. I don't think the minister has the information. If he does, do you think he should provide that to the committee and to you people?

**Mr Ellis:** Looking at the mayors' report and Metro government's report, they both indicate there are savings. If the government does have information it feels would be helpful to help the populace make up their own minds, yes, it should be released.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Ellis, for coming forward and making a presentation this evening.

STEVE KERPER

**The Chair:** Would Steve Kerper please come forward? Good evening, Mr Kerper. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Steve Kerper:** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for allowing me the opportunity of speaking here this evening. As you know, my name is Steve Kerper. I'd like you to be aware of the fact that I've been practising real estate sales in Metropolitan Toronto for the last 29 years.

Over these years, I've had the good fortune of helping many families with their housing needs throughout Metropolitan Toronto. It has been my experience that families in most cases purchase their home based on the neighbourhood it was located in and not necessarily the municipality.

I have found that the buying process starts with the determination that the family may need to locate in the east, west, north or central part of Metro, and then narrowing it down to a particular neighbourhood.

I have also had the experience of helping numerous employees of companies that had relocated their operations from Montreal to Metropolitan Toronto. As far as these families were concerned, they were moving to Toronto, not to one of the six municipalities that make up Metro. Their understanding was clear that Toronto was all of Metro, and when they found their new home in a particular neighbourhood that just happened to be in one of the six municipalities, that was merely accepted; it certainly didn't make any difference as far as they were concerned, for they clearly understood they were moving to Toronto.

Today when I receive calls from realtors asking me to help a family that is relocating, these calls may come from as far away as the east coast or the west coast of Canada or from anywhere in between; it can even be as close as a city only an hour's drive from Metropolitan Toronto, or for that matter, a call can come from anywhere in the US. The fact is, these realtors and buyers identify the new destination as Toronto, meaning the entire Metro area; very seldom, if ever, do they refer to the other five municipalities.

They do not know or really care where the artificial political boundaries are. I believe our current artificial political boundaries, to those outside of Metro, are meaningless. I'm convinced that unifying Metro into one city will only recognize the reality that already exists.

Unification will further benefit me. It will make it much easier to address the needs of my buyers by having one municipal government to contact as it relates to all the various regulations that affect housing instead of the current seven governments with all their many differences.

I want to share with you some of the examples of how the current two-tier government affects the community I live in. I live in the neighbourhood of Bayview Village in North York. Our neighbourhood, during its 40 years of existence, has had a very active and large association. I have personally taken an active role serving on the executive and have taken my turn as its president.

Over the years we have addressed many issues that have affected our community. Our relationship with the various individual elected representatives at all levels of government has always been an open and healthy one but oftentimes frustrating. Let me explain why at times it was frustrating by giving you a few examples.

The issues that have and will continue to affect us mostly will be developments around the community and the traffic it creates. The current issues are the Sheppard subway and the development it will generate. By and large, most members in our community are not opposed to these upcoming changes, but the frustrating part is having to deal with them at two levels of government. Our questions and concerns sometimes could not be addressed by one or the other elected representative because it was not in their jurisdiction. For example, is it a Metro road or is it a North York road? Is it a Metro park or a North York park? Which level of government is responsible for traffic studies for a particular development or traffic flow or traffic signal lights?

Let me share with you a small and silly example of frustration caused by our two levels of government. A few years ago our community decided it would be of benefit to our residents if we had a bicycle rack installed near a bus stop. We did a lot of work in dealing with the idea. We researched the various products and priced it. We put our proposal forward, whereby we would purchase the bicycle rack and also be prepared to pay for the installation. You could say it was presented to our elected representatives on a silver platter. After many months of frustration, the idea died because North York and Metro could not agree on which level of government should be responsible for the installation — mind you, at no cost to the taxpayers.

I very much look forward to the day when I can hold one elected representative accountable for municipal issues instead of the current political games and turf wars that have been known to happen.

Another change I'm fully supportive of is a fairer property assessment system. This is long overdue. This is a change that various levels of government over the years have tried to deal with but have not succeeded, the most recent being the attempt by Metro as a result of trying to appease the various municipalities within Metro and the special interest groups. The plan was so watered down that it became almost meaningless. In the end, the previous provincial government would not approve the Metro plan and we are right back with an unfair property tax system.

This provincial government's proposal allows for the tools by municipal governments to implement the changes fairly and reasonably, which I'm fully in support of. However, I do have a major concern; that is, we must have only one municipal government to deal with property taxation. To have anything but — to have two levels

of government or to have several local governments — would only invite disaster.

I will conclude my remarks by stating that this government is doing what it has promised Ontarians. The message that the taxpayers of Ontario have been sending our politicians is less government and less taxation. I believe that for the first time in a long time the government is delivering what the majority wants. Reducing our municipal government from two levels and 106 politicians to 44 and one level of government with one mayor and one voice is most definitely the right thing to do. A much fairer property tax system is long overdue. Bringing logic to school boards and reducing out-of-classroom expenses will benefit not only our students but also the taxpayers. The issue of who pays for and delivers other services such as social services I leave to other experts, but I feel strongly that if constructively approached, a fair and acceptable solution can be found.

I urge this government to get on with the task of reorganizing our province and Metro. I appeal to all Ontarians and most specifically the residents of Metro and our municipal politicians to calmly and constructively deal with these changes for the benefit of all.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Kerper, for your presentation. You've effectively used up your allotted time.

**Mr Kerper:** Good. I just sold a house too.

**The Chair:** Good poise in the middle of your presentation; I saw that go off. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this evening.

**Mr Hastings:** Mr Chair, unanimous consent to ask Mr Kerper a question?

**The Chair:** I hear a no.

**Mr Kerper:** Thank you for not granting it.

## 2010

### TORONTO HISTORICAL BOARD

**The Chair:** Would Marion Joppe please come forward? Good evening and welcome to the committee.

**Dr Marion Joppe:** I'm Dr Marion Joppe and I am the chair of the Toronto Historical Board. With me tonight is another board member, Mr Chris Makuch, as well as two staff from the historical board, George Waters, the general manager, and Marcia Cuthbert, who is with the historical preservation staff.

In just a few more days, on March 6, the city of Toronto will be 163 years old. If Bill 103 is passed a few more months after that, the historic city of Toronto will be extinguished.

On July 1 of this year, the Toronto Historical Board itself will celebrate its 37th year. Established in 1960 by Toronto city council under special enabling legislation, the board was created originally to manage the museums owned by the city of Toronto. Today we operate five vibrant, city-owned heritage attractions: historic Fort York, the Marine Museum of Upper Canada, MacKenzie House, Colborne Lodge and Spadina, offering educational programs, fostering civic pride and bringing tourist dollars into our community.

Toronto has been a leader in Ontario in the preservation of our heritage. In 1967, a full seven years before province-wide heritage legislation existed, the city of

Toronto, with the strong support of its citizens, obtained special legislation enabling it to encourage the preservation of the city's unique identity through designation of properties of architectural or historical value or interest.

With the eventual passing of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1975, city council by resolution asked the Toronto Historical Board to continue its role in the preservation of our treasured built heritage by taking on the duties of a local architectural conservation advisory committee, or LACAC, in addition to its museums role.

Since that time, on the recommendation of the board and with widespread citizen endorsement, city council, in accordance with the heritage policies in its official plan, has designated over 450 individual heritage properties as well as three heritage conservation districts, making them eligible for the protection, albeit limited, provided under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Continuing with its leadership role in heritage preservation, in 1987 the city of Toronto obtained special legislation enabling it to exert greater control over the demolition of designated heritage properties than that provided under the Ontario Heritage Act. Today nine other municipalities in Ontario have obtained strengthened heritage demolition control powers similar to Toronto's, based upon the legislation originated by the Toronto Historical Board.

Even more significantly, the city's legislation has been adopted as a model for inclusion in the long-awaited new Ontario Heritage Act which, we are advised, the Minister of Culture is hopeful to be in a position to proceed with as soon as the legislative agenda allows.

Which brings me, now that I have made these necessarily brief introductory remarks about the board's contribution to the quality of life in Toronto, Ontario's capital, to the subject before your committee: Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, 1996.

One cannot but remark upon the contrast shown between the amount of preparation and consultation put into developing the new but unfortunately still pending Ontario Heritage Act and the lack of information and prior consultation with the affected parties regarding Bill 103. As our mayor, Barbara Hall, stated in addressing your committee, "With legislation as sweeping as Bill 103, the public would normally be presented with a carefully prepared white paper which explained the government's proposals." Instead we, both board and staff, who have had to examine the impact of this proposal on heritage have found the legislation to be incomplete, with essential fragments of the puzzle being merely alluded to, and not always consistently, in press releases or flyers.

To give a specific example, the six community councils and the geographic areas they will deal with are nowhere to be found in the bill, yet these bodies, according to a ministry press release, "may" be making final decisions on rezoning applications. The rezoning stage is the very point at which the fate of heritage buildings is often irrevocably determined, yet there is no mention anywhere of how the crucial heritage input, traditionally provided by the LACAC, will be factored into these decisions. This situation must be rectified. The position of heritage in the decision-making process must be assured before proceeding with any amalgamation.

The legislation does say there will be neighbourhood committees of council-appointed volunteers. The bill makes these committees mandatory but does not indicate how many there will be. Ministry materials indicate that there will be at least 44 of these neighbourhood committees, one for each of the 44 wards, and that they will be advising the six as yet only sketchily outlined community councils.

Local community input into heritage is critically important, yet it would be ludicrous to suggest that LACACs become the heritage equivalent of the proposed neighbourhood committees and that the number of LACACs in the urban area of Metro be increased from the existing six to 44. Equally impractical, and even harmful, would be the idea of giving a sole individual on each of the 44 neighbourhood committees the responsibility for advising on applications affecting heritage properties in the particular ward. Our heritage is too important for its protection to be fragmented to such an extent.

Local architectural conservation advisory committees are mandated under the Ontario Heritage Act, yet the province has been silent as to how heritage will be protected under Bill 103. We need assurance that heritage will be protected before entering into any amalgamation.

According to the bill, a provincially appointed transition team will hold public consultations on the functions to be assigned to these neighbourhood committees and the method of choosing their members and on the rationalization and integration of municipal services across the new city. But the transition team, even if it were to be appointed as early as April, has been given so many other responsibilities, from establishing the new city's organizational structure to hiring the new department heads and other employees, that one wonders how it can complete its tasks and give sufficient thought to the essential matter of protection of our heritage before the January 1, 1998, deadline.

Matters which need to be carefully considered include combined LACAC and museum functions, or separate; an arm's-length body to advocate for heritage, or heritage within a civic department; a heritage body with its own staff, or support staff from the municipal department; a heritage body reporting directly to full council, to community councils, or both?

The Toronto Historical Board must be a part of any such discussions.

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Dr Joppe. I apologize for interrupting, but you're closing in on the final minute of your presentation. I just want you to know that in case there's something you really want to emphasize in the last little bit.

**Dr Joppe:** Okay. I'm going to skip to the part where we talk about what the board has recommended be considered.

The board emphasizes the important role heritage plays in the economy as well as in the quality of life of the community.

The board has expressed its concern about the pressure heritage has been under for a number of years, with continuing reductions in funding and prolonged delays in the passing of effective new heritage legislation.

The board urges the government to provide adequate time and information to allow for proper consideration of the role of heritage in any future form of governance in the Metro area.

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The board asks the province to ensure that heritage continues to play a central quality-of-life role within the city's communities and neighbourhoods.

The board asks the government to ensure that should the bill be enacted, adequate time and opportunities are provided with the transition team to ensure that heritage matters are thoroughly considered and strongly positioned.

The board also requests that should the transition team be appointed, it be instructed by the province that in determining heritage management structures and procedures, appropriate consideration and recognition be given to the many variations in the extent, magnitude and nature of the heritage resources throughout the areas of the new city and of the history of their management by the local communities, including the important role of both staff and community volunteers.

Last, the board requests the province to ensure that the Toronto Historical Board is consulted before any of the proposed changes affecting the future of heritage in the city of Toronto are made.

In essence, as our mayor has declared: Slow down and get it right.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this evening.

#### ROY WINTER

**The Chair:** Would Roy Winter please come forward? Good evening, Mr Winter. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Roy Winter:** Thank you very much. Excuse my nervousness. There seem to be so many details that everyone is trying to keep track of.

I am in favour of the plans to amalgamate the current seven governments of Metro Toronto into one city of Toronto government. I feel that the economic gains are self-evident, with the reduction of the total workforce and the duplication of services that now exist. I am not sure if the dollar figures that have been mentioned will be reached; however, savings will be achieved and probably in some ways that were not thought of initially.

While I feel that the economic implications would be reason enough to amalgamate during these times of record deficits, another compelling reason is the common identity we all share. We are all people of Toronto. In my case, it is the neighbourhood of Don Mills, not the artificial city of North York.

A direct benefit of a 2.3-million-person single city is the possibilities that exist for helping to solve common problems, problems which affect the city as a whole. For example, in very short order it seems that the city of Toronto will have the responsibility for our welfare costs placed upon our property taxes. This will lead to the unparalleled opportunity presenting itself for a unified urban centre having open neighbourhood discussions to help resolve an issue that has been seen as a provincial

matter for years. It will soon become evident to all ratepayers that a unified voice will help affect the costs of the social services we deliver to the members of our own neighbourhoods who are in need of them.

Dealing with such a sensitive issue on neighbourhood committees and community councils will allow Toronto to arrive at an equitable and compassionate solution. I believe this process will cause our welfare system to change for the better, because it will be in every ratepayer's direct interest for it to succeed. There is a good chance that, as a result, our property taxes will drop.

The amalgamation of Metro Toronto and the downloading of assorted costs for services will lead to a better provincial financial picture and a more equal system of dealing with different city departments, especially for businesses, which currently must wade through seven different bureaucracies.

We will go through a period of turmoil while all the necessary changes are implemented, that is for sure. However, I believe there will be much greater interest and participation in city politics as a result. This participation, in the form of neighbourhood committees, will bring more people together to discuss the issues that affect them. These neighbourhood committees must be structured in a commonsense manner and a system must be devised to show that their input can make a real difference. To block their voices would be a sign that this new system is failing. I am sure that most pieces of this new puzzle will be in place and that we will accept it as a good system within two years. That's about all I have to say.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Plenty of time for questions.

**Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North):** I don't know if I'll use all the time. Thank you very much for bringing your presentation forward, Mr Winter.

Last week I spent a number of days in my riding, which is in northern Ontario. One of the concerns there was that Bill 103 and Bill 104, a number of these bills, are all linked together, and in order to save money, thousands of people are going to have either lose their jobs or be replaced by lower-paid workers. When you take the spinoff effect of all these bills, the city of Toronto, I understand, just with amalgamation is going to have lay off about 4,500 workers to have dollar savings. If you multiply that with Bill 104, people are telling me it's an attack on unionized workers right across the province, because what happens with Bill 103 in the city of Toronto is exactly what's going to happen with Bill 104.

Municipalities are being told now in northern Ontario, and I'm sure it's happening in other areas, that if you don't restructure — the status quo is not good enough — you're going to have to get together with five or six other municipalities, join together, lay off your town administrators, lay off some of your workforce and get together or you're not going to get a single penny of any restructuring dollars that have been set in emergency funds. People were telling me, last week when I was around there, that the disruption could mean 100,000 unionized workers in this province would lose their jobs and either be replaced by non-unionized workers or their wages brought down to a lower standard.

What effect do you think this is going to have on the city of Toronto and all the province if this is the intention of Mike Harris and his government?

**Mr Winter:** It sounds like a very valid concern for all these members who are in a position that they may find themselves in quite soon. However, I just managed to work my way through a real-life industry layoff and a new job, and these people will also find that their jobs are not guaranteed, as mine was not guaranteed. How will it affect them on an individual basis? I don't know whether among a large group of people like that they will be given the opportunity for the strong to come forward. They probably will and some of them will improve themselves through that process.

I don't feel that anyone is in this to lay off 100,000 people for no reason. I feel that the way the economy has been — we've all seen private industry and how they have had to compete. Is this a type of competing in public industry? I don't think so, but in a way it is competing with the taxpayers for their respect. While there will be many stories of hardship, these stories exist all the time. In the end, I feel that when it is all added up, we will be a better province.

**Mr Len Wood:** So you think that we're going to have to go through a lot pain and suffering before all this is completed right across the province? Bill 103 is only the beginning. They've just turned over one stone. From what I can understand, and the parliamentary assistant is there and he was at ROMA and he's saying: "Look, if you don't do something — the status quo is not good enough in northern Ontario, in southern Ontario or wherever. The status quo is not good enough and you won't get any dollars."

The only way they are going to save is by firing the town administrators, get together and contract out and whatever. The disruption that's taking place there is huge when you're thinking of unemployment at 10%; it's just massive. Is Ontario ready for that type of disruption?

**Mr Winter:** I take it you're against the amalgamation.

**Mr Len Wood:** I'm against throwing thousands of people out of work for no reason. If that means I'm against amalgamation, yes, I would say I'm against it. 2030

**Mr Winter:** I don't believe that people are thrown out of work permanently. I believe there will be all the turmoils we are all aware are already happening to all communities with industry and government workers. I'm sure everyone who is a government worker, unionized or not, looking at the prospect of being put in a position where their department is considered to be no longer economically viable, or whatever the case may be, certainly will not feel this is a good idea, but I feel that the province as a whole and Canada as a country are strong and wealthy enough to survive this upheaval. The province is making drastic changes, and through change comes opportunity as well as suffering. In the end I feel we will be a better province.

The economic position that the current government found when it took office hopefully will never recur or be at the level it is now, and hopefully we can take some of those dollars that we're paying in interest and put them towards future civic programs which will hire more civic

employees when we have cash to pay them instead of paying debt.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Winter, for coming forward this evening to make your presentation to the committee.

### SIMON RICHARDS

**The Chair:** Would Simon Richards please come forward. Good evening, Mr Richards. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Simon Richards:** Thank you very much. I'd like to thank the people I was pestering to get a hearing at this committee, I appreciate the opportunity to use my voice before it's taken away from me.

Hi guys, ma'am. It's nice to get a chance to talk at you. I don't want to speak about amalgamation. I want to talk about Bill 103, and I make the distinction because I don't believe that Bill 103 is about amalgamation. I think if it were about amalgamation, then you would be listening to people like Jane Jacobs, who is one of the pre-eminent urban planners on the planet, you would be listening to the eloquent and reasoned concerns of my fellow citizens who have appeared before you as their elected representatives, but that would be if it were about amalgamation, and I don't believe it is.

I think that this bill is about seizing power and about stealing my voice, and I'm not talking personally here. Two and a half million people are not going to be able, because of Bill 103, to share in the shaping of the vision that creates our city, be it mega or otherwise. That's what I think the bill is about. Maybe I'm wrong, so perhaps you'd help me out on this.

You've got 106 elected representatives now — that's correct? — and we're moving to 44 elected representatives, so that is a diminution of representation, is it not? That's diminished representatives? Yes? I should say I agree with the idea of fewer politicians; I disagree with the idea of fewer elected representatives.

We live in a system that is a representative democracy. Diminished representation seems to me to be diminished democracy. Are you guys with me or what? Okay. Then we end up getting to elect 45 representatives, but these 45 representatives don't have any power. They're not responsible to us. They can't shape the city the way the citizens desire. They have to answer to this transition team. Is that correct? That's not correct?

**The Chair:** Mr Richards, the time is yours to give a presentation. If you'd like to give it up to the government caucus to ask you questions or whatever, that's yours to decide. The idea is that it's your time to make a presentation to the committee.

**Mr Richards:** Thank you very much, but I can speak to these guys, can't I?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr Richards:** And are they allowed to speak to me? I don't mind about the 10 minutes, you know.

**The Chair:** It's not a running question-and-answer period, though, is my point, sir; it's a presentation period.

**Mr Richards:** Thank you. The authority of the transition team supersedes the authority of my elected representatives, according to this bill, it seems to me. Right? Nod. Shake. Shrug.

**Mr Ford:** It's to supervise the transition period.

**Mr Richards:** But their authority supersedes the elected representatives, right? For instance, if I elect a representative and I want that representative to create more shelters, we'll say, if that doesn't match with the fiscal constraints, or whatever, of the transition team, then the transition team is not going to allow it. That seems to me to be what the bill is saying.

**Mr Parker:** Show us where.

**Mrs Munro:** Do you want us to respond?

**Mr Richards:** Yes, I'm fine with the 10 minutes. That's all I've got.

**The Chair:** Mr Richards, if you want to lay out a bunch of questions and then leave the time for answers, that's fine, but it's not a running dialogue, a back-and-forth question-and-answer period.

**Mr Richards:** Okay, fair enough.

My major concern is that the transition team's authority supersedes, for me, fewer representatives so that my voice is weaker, that we have more people, fewer representatives. To me, this seems to be taking away my democracy and the democracy of my fellow citizens. I'm really concerned about that.

I'd like to know why you people feel it's necessary to silence me and my fellow citizens. I'd like to know why you people want to deny 2.5 million people the right to shape the city they live in without having to go through this appointed group. I'd really like to know why you folks are so anxious to be known as the group of individuals that has suspended democracy in this country. It seems to me like the Common Sense Revolutionary junta. I just feel ripped off. I think you folks are stealing my democracy.

I think you folks have probably got people in your family who fought in the last couple of wars, and one of the rallying cries of those wars was preserving democracy. It seems to me that you folks are trampling all over that legacy. I've come to these hearings, I've watched you all, and you're doing or saying nothing that makes me think in any way that you're not about stealing my democratic voice.

I guess if you really believe in this bill the way it is, you'll pass it through and we'll all know you for what you are. I think if you disagree with this bill in any way, then you really must change it. I don't know what you're up against. I don't know who the boss is. It doesn't seem to be the people. I don't know if you actually are going to have, if you'll pardon me, the courage and the integrity not to put this bill through until there are major amendments.

I think the opposition parties have to be responsible enough to nullify all the anti-democratic legislation this government is putting through and that when you come to power, because of course you will come to power — that's politics — you don't try to benefit from any of this power grab that is going on from this party.

What's the difference between Mike Harris and Slobodan Milosevic? The number of people on the streets, and that will change if this type of thing keeps going on.

**Mr Ford:** Different times.

**Mr Richards:** Do you really believe so, sir?

**Mr Ford:** Yes, sir, I do, very much so.

**Mr Richards:** Did Milosevic not take away the people who had been elected, saying, "No, they are not elected"? Is that not what's happening here? We've got this board of trustees in place that has got say; We've got this transition team in place that has the final say. Who are they?

**Mr Ford:** It's based on the strangulation of a massive debt that we have.

2040

**Mr Richards:** It's not a city debt.

**Mr Ford:** It's a debt that causes the cities, towns, everybody —

**The Chair:** Mr Richards, you have a minute remaining if you'd like to sum up or pass the question off. Either way is fine.

**Mr Richards:** No, I'm finished. Go ahead, please.

**Mrs Munro:** Mr Richards, I'd just like to comment because you've asked some extremely important questions. The first thing I would like to ask you is if you believe that the current structure of Metropolitan Toronto government is the one we should stay with. I want to assume an answer here because I only have one minute. If you say yes, okay, that's fine. If you say no, I'd like to suggest to you that when the mayors decided to get together and talk, they came up with over \$200 million in savings. They also reduced the size of representation to I believe 48 councillors. So those mayors' plan then was to go to 48 councillors instead of what's in Bill 103, which would be 44. I just want to put that in context. In Bill 103 there's one mayor. Obviously in the mayors' proposal there are six mayors.

**The Chair:** Mrs Munro, you'll have to make it quick, or we can leave it at that and he can try to answer in the little time he has left.

**Mr Richards:** I think the problems we have in Toronto and in the surrounding regions are nowhere near as great as your party is making out. I think you're trying to pay off the provincial debt on the backs of the cities, and I think that you are not caring a damn about the shape of the cities that the people of these cities have built over all of these years. I think you're creating a problem to do something else and you're saying: "We're going to screw the cities anyway. To hell with that." For me, amalgamation shmalgamation. I don't really care if it's done properly. It doesn't seem to be being done properly.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Richards. We've come to the end of your allotted time. Thank you for coming forward to make your presentation today.

JANE PEPINO

**The Chair:** Would Jane Pepino please come forward. Welcome, Ms Pepino, to the committee.

**Ms Jane Pepino:** Thank you very much, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Jane Pepino and I have been a resident of the city of Toronto since 1965. With my family I have always lived south of St Clair Avenue, within walking distance of Yonge Street. As a result, we very much consider ourselves urban dwellers firmly rooted in downtown Toronto.

This evening I bring to this committee not only a fierce attachment to my home in downtown Toronto, but

also 23 years' experience as a lawyer practising land development, planning and municipal law. In that regard, over this time I have worked with and appeared before each of the planning boards, planning committees, planning advisory committees, planning and development committees, committees of the whole, call it what you will, of councils for each of the local governments in Metro as well as of Metro itself, and I recognize two members here this evening before whom, in previous lives, I have pleaded my cause from time to time.

Given that I have also acted in virtually every other local and regional government within the GTA, as well as in a variety of local governments not within regional governments across this province, I have a basis of comparison, and I believe a good working knowledge, of the various models of local government. It's from this perspective and with this knowledge that I appear this evening to add my voice to the many who have already appeared before these hearings in support of Bill 103.

It is my firm belief that this action on the part of the provincial government is not only necessary but also long overdue. Without the critical mass, the strength and the efficiency that would flow from an amalgamated government, the geographic area presently known as Metro will become increasingly less competitive within the GTA, as well as provincially and internationally. This can only detract from our quality of life in Toronto and each of its present constituent municipalities because we have had to rely on regional economic strength. That loss of strength will in turn lead to the decline of the area generally, and particularly the present city of Toronto and the smaller, weaker city of York and borough of East York. The hollowing out of downtown Toronto, in my judgement, would be the result.

I believe also that amalgamation is necessary because Metro and its constituent local municipalities are effectively gridlocked. They have been unable to produce the collective focus and commitment to advance that area which others already see as and call Toronto. The minute you go more than 60 miles from this building, everyone thinks of everything within 20 miles of this building as Toronto. Within the seven local governments in Metropolitan Toronto, its six mayors, one chair and 99 councillors, no cooperative action has been possible. Our municipalities and their mainly full-time politicians have grown overprotective of their fiefdoms and have been unwilling and therefore unable to make any changes. In my opinion, the changes introduced in Bill 103 have been long overdue and certainly would not have been initiated by the municipalities themselves.

You've heard of the number of studies that stretch back to virtually the date of creation of Metro Toronto itself, but even in the most recent two years, the inability of the various municipalities to agree on a workable plan is proof enough of the necessity for provincial action. You've heard of the Golden task force, the GTA mayors' and chairs' seven-point plan, the Crombie recommendations or even the cobbled-together suggestions by the six local municipalities. Suffice to say, however, there has been no consensus among the affected municipalities as to strategies for much-needed reform and what everyone recognizes is necessary: working together.

Another recent example of the inability of local municipalities within Metro to work cooperatively was the wasteful and petty competition between the city of Scarborough and the city of Toronto on property tax assessment. You will recall that a number of years ago Scarborough appealed a large number of city of Toronto assessments to buttress its argument that property tax reform was long overdue. My property, my home, was just one of those targeted by Scarborough. In addition to wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars of Scarborough taxpayers' money to pursue these vexatious appeals, the city of Toronto wasted hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars to defend against them.

The simple fact is that property tax reform is also long overdue. Inequities do exist among and between the various local municipalities. However, it would only be in a unified city of Toronto that the province could undertake the necessary property tax reforms in confidence that they would be administered in an evenhanded fashion and that support services that they support would be delivered equitably across that broader geographic area. I am prepared to have my property taxes adjusted, since I am firmly of the belief that a unified city of Toronto will provide more cost-effective government and be a more effective economic presence within the national and international economies. The more competitive we become, the more able we will be to fund our services without resort to only property taxes as a base.

I need to say this in response perhaps only to the previous speaker: Municipalities are merely creatures of statute. They have no powers beyond those which are derived from provincially enacted legislation. For opponents of Bill 103 to suggest that the province's legislative process regarding Bill 103 somehow supplants local democracy is to totally ignore the legal and structural realities of local government in Canada, which are based on British law dating back to Magna Carta. Municipalities in Ontario are not Athenian city-states gaining power from the will of the people; they are instead incorporated by acts of provincial Parliament for the purpose of providing for various matters within provincial jurisdiction that the province has decided are better delivered not by the province, but below.

I have confidence that a combination of careful consideration of implementation and the stabilization of both the transitional and permanent reserve funds will ensure that the availability and quality of community services remain high. The present discussions regarding restructuring of funding must have as their primary goal the maintenance of the quality of life for the new unified Toronto, including support for all its neighbourhoods, including the downtown.

The result then of a smaller, unified city council will be to create a council that can devote its energies to better decisions, creating a focus and vision for the city to keep it livable, to keep it competitive and to keep its place as one of the top international cities. It is also only through the critical mass and scale which the unified city will deliver that the present Metro, which is essentially a no-growth or slow-growth area, will maintain any clout as against either existing or also reformed regional governments in the rapidly growing 905 area. I remind

you only of Vaughan's slogan, "A little ahead" or "A little above Toronto."

**2050**

**Mr Hastings:** "The city above Toronto."

**Ms Pepino:** Thank you. "The city above Toronto." I resent that, but it's a sign of the kind of critical mass that Toronto will only benefit from.

For all the reasons that made Metro Toronto such a success when instituted, the citizens of a unified Toronto will benefit from having a single and powerful voice to maintain the status and profile of Toronto across the country and beyond.

The other issue I would like to address briefly is that of neighbourhood and community councils. Laudable though the concept of these grass-roots councils may be, I have a concern that, as the transition team establishes the rules under which they operate, they not become formalized into more levels of regulation or control than the various processes presently in place for matters of zoning and official plan amendment. The entire thrust of the Red Tape Review Commission and the recent amendments to the Planning Act has been to streamline and speed up the planning process. By formalizing neighbourhood councils, who may then have to report to community councils, who in turn would then provide a report to the council of a unified city, the potential exists to overly complicate the planning process in the new city of Toronto alone.

Neighbourhood committees, in my judgement, should be kept entirely voluntary and only advisory in nature, similar to the way organized ratepayer associations operate at the moment, giving input to planners and local councillors on matters which affect their particular neighbourhoods. They should not become formalized such as the appointed planning advisory board which presently exists in the city of Toronto but only in the city of Toronto as a body dealing with planning issues if to do so would put them as an additional body to what I presume will be committees of the new council such as planning and development or land use committees.

Having said that, I certainly welcome the concept of one single planning process for applications for lands within what is now Metro. At the present time, the single shared characteristic of each municipality's planning process is its absolute difference from that of its neighbour. This is burdensome, unreasonable, and runs counter to the goal of ensuring accessibility to everyone to this most important process.

In conclusion, it is my belief that Bill 103 is simply the next step in a reasonable evolution in municipal governance which will enable the area known around the world as Toronto to be stronger and more competitive. The whole truly will be greater than the sum of its parts. The most important job then rests with the citizens to elect 44 representatives to this council who will understand and grasp the benefits of this new structure to strengthen Toronto's presence. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Pepino, for your presentation. You've exhausted your allotted time, and I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this evening.

### DAVE FORESTELL

**The Chair:** Would Dave Forestell please come forward. Good evening, Mr Forestell. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Dave Forestell:** Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address you today. As a Toronto resident, I was obviously quite concerned when I read flyers that foretold the end of local democracy in Toronto. As a young citizen I was also quite concerned when I saw what some people's opinion of local democracy was.

After attending several town hall meetings, it became clear that it was not local democracy that was being practised by opponents of this bill but rather very vocal hypocrisy, and it was coming from people claiming to represent me, a grade 11 student and a young citizen. Rather than heckling back at meetings, however, I decided to exercise my right to local democracy and to follow the process that has always been used by the city and by the province: to give a deputation.

I'm strongly in favour of Bill 103, the proposed amalgamation of the Toronto area's seven governments into one. As someone who will soon be entering the workplace and soon be paying taxes, I want to know that I will be entering a workforce where the environment is suitable to private sector job creation and has a fair and equitable tax system. An equitable system of government is what is really needed: a system of government where both ends of a street are run by the same government, where a street is run by the same government as its sidewalks, a government whereby different rules and regulations will not apply when you cross the street.

The controversy during the summer over smoking in restaurants really crystallizes the issue here in several respects. First, you have a situation where someone may enter a restaurant on one side of Victoria Park and smoke. However, when they cross the street, that option's no longer available. This is unfair to customers and it's unfair to restaurateurs. This kind of inequity is also the reason growth in Toronto has stagnated. To create an environment suitable to attracting business, you cannot have confusing and contradicting bylaws across a fragmented area of artificial boundaries. The NDP have always been strong supporters of employment equity, so it surprises me that they don't support equitable opportunities to create employment.

Second, you have a very controversial issue with a large number of Torontonians vehemently opposed to plans the government is making. Why is there no referendum on the smoking issue? Why are there no signs and buttons? Why isn't the city distributing information to residents to let them know about these changes? Because at the time it's not convenient. It would look bad on the city to have residents know how ludicrous the idea of banning a legal substance was. So we hear nothing.

We continue to hear nothing from the city until rent control becomes an issue. Then the city springs into action, filling up buses with protesters, commissioning studies to support their claims.

Once again, for a while we hear nothing from the city. Then Bill 103 is introduced in the Legislature and once

again the city springs into action to oppose the change and keep the status quo, no matter how faulty it may be.

It seems to me as though the only time the city cares to tell residents about what they are doing is when it's to oppose something another level of government is doing. The city of Toronto is the defender of the status quo, and the status quo is not working for the city of Toronto.

The young people of today are looking for an equitable workplace, a workplace where jobs go to the most deserving. However, the Metro government has a practice of only hiring unionized construction companies to do work for them. That's not equitable and I hope that will change under a unified Toronto.

The environment in Toronto is not one where business can thrive. I am fully confident, however, that under a unified Toronto, a Toronto that can compete internationally and a Toronto with one voice, we can attract that business. That alone is reason enough for a unified Toronto. However, that's not the only reason.

Under a unified Toronto we can save, according to the KPMG report, \$865 million in the first three years and \$300 million annually from there on. The mayors say the study is flawed and that it was completed in only three weeks. The report they submitted in response, however, took only a day to prepare: another example of local hypocrisy. However, even supposing that you choose not to believe the KPMG report, there is also the Metro study which suggests savings figures very similar to those found in the KPMG report.

The opponents of a unified Toronto have told me that having seven administrations do the job of one will not save money. Common sense tells me it will. Amalgamating services does not strike me as a new idea. Our amalgamated police forces rank as the best in North America. Providing regional service works, and in fact many of the services that people value most, like the police, ambulance and public transit, are already amalgamated, and unlike the city of Toronto, they're working for us.

As I said earlier, I live in Toronto, but my school borders East York, where I eat lunch many days. Sometimes in the evening I'll go out for dinner to North York. I don't realize I'm crossing city boundaries when I do this. I ask all of you, why do we need three separate boards of health to examine those restaurants? Furthermore, when I take out the garbage in the morning, sometimes I see the garbage truck drive by my house, but it doesn't stop there; it stops three doors over in North York. How is that efficient?

Wendell Cox, the American consultant the city hired when they could have created a Canadian job, has said that amalgamation has not worked in many US cities, and he may be right. However, I think it's time we started looking to Canada for Canadian solutions. The Halifax example has also been bantered around a lot, but it's not a good comparison. In Halifax you have a large geographic area without a solid downtown core. In Toronto you have a smaller geographic area and a very definite downtown core. As well, much of the land in the Halifax amalgamation was unserviced. In Toronto all the land being amalgamated is already serviced.

A board of trustees to oversee expenditures is a positive step towards fiscal responsibility, and fiscal responsibility is what people of my generation need from government. By eliminating approximately 60 elected politicians, you're leaving 60 politicians who are accountable to no one from the time the bill is passed into law until the November election. Those people need to be accountable to someone. To leave politicians in control of our tax dollars while not being accountable would be extremely irresponsible. Having an independent body to oversee those people serves that purpose well.

**2100**

Most people I talk to don't know who their local city councillor is or who their local Metro councillor is. Why? Because nobody knows what they do. No one knows who to talk to when they have a problem with one level of government and inevitably they're given the runaround. Anyone who's ever tried to book a park for a picnic, as I have, can attest to that. I think it would probably be easier to book a concert on the front lawn of Queen's Park; at least then you'd know who to talk to.

By clearly defining the role of government, municipal politicians are now more accountable to residents, something that has been missing for far too long. Many claim that politicians will no longer be accessible under a unified Toronto. I disagree. I think that, if anything, they'll be more accessible. Metro averages 78,000 residents per ward. A unified Toronto will see that number reduced by about 25,000 residents — over a third. Also, by setting up community offices so that residents don't need to go downtown to speak with their councillor or resolve a problem, they become more accessible.

It may be that you have a concern you want brought before council but it doesn't warrant a full trip to a councillor's office. Under a unified Toronto, residents will be more informed of what's going on around them and will in turn be able to keep their representative more aware of their concerns through community and neighbourhood committees. If the unified Toronto debate has shown us anything, it's that people do care very much about their community. Through neighbourhood committees, those people could directly affect the changes taking place locally. This is the best way to ensure real local democracy.

Whenever change is proposed, there will be opponents. People who are benefiting from the status quo will never like the idea of change. It's only natural to assume that the six mayors will not like the prospect of potentially losing their jobs. The same goes for the elected councillors; it's scary to lose a job in today's economy. However, those politicians should be fully confident they have created an environment where the private sector can grow and, as such, they shouldn't have too much trouble finding new jobs, and if they haven't, well then, it's time for real change.

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you very much for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. You have touched on the democratic process and referendums. You know the government approved the Orillia Rama casino. It approved the Niagara casino in record time. They have

approved the so-called one-arm bandits, some 30,000 of them. You're aware of that.

**Mr Forestell:** Yes.

**Mr Sergio:** Now they are setting up 40 permanent casinos throughout the province or Metro. Before the election Mr Harris said, "I am going to have a referendum on that." Do you believe Bill 103 is less important or more important than casinos and we should have a binding referendum?

**Mr Forestell:** I certainly think the studies have shown that casinos are very detrimental to society in some ways and I think it's more an issue of principle than Metro governance. I hope that when they pass them out, they take a lot more care to ensure they're secret. I know that with the ballot they're doing in my school, personally I've already got three ballots and I have to sign my name to every one of them, which really isn't too democratic.

**Mr Sergio:** Are you saying we should have a referendum on the casinos? I'm sorry, I didn't get you.

**Mr Forestell:** I don't think that's for me to decide actually. If they care to have a referendum on casinos, that's fine, but I hope the referendum process is a lot more democratic than the one that's taking place now.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Forestell, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

#### EDNA HUDSON

**The Chair:** Would Edna Hudson please come forward. Good evening. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Edna Hudson:** Good evening. My name is Edna Hudson. I have lived in Ontario nearly all my adult life with my family. I'm an industrial engineer with strong interests in history and the architecture of Toronto. I belong to the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.

Cost analyses, property taxes, new uses for old city halls are perhaps the preferred subject of discourse with some of you, but I feel it's more important to me, as a citizen, to assess the political validity of the proposals in Bill 103 without proceeding to other details at this time. I hope you will bear with me.

To control any engineering system, you must first measure what you have; that is, you must describe the steady state and then after an intervention the steady state usually returns because it's stronger than the disturbance. If that's not the case, there may be wild oscillations before a new steady state is established. I'll consider Bill 103 in these terms.

My assumptions about an initial steady state for the political culture of our province lead me to the following: (1) Things work. It's not much bother. We are not often worked up. (2) Change will be gradual. (3) We regard each other with equal respect. (4) We define ourselves as individuals.

There has always been constant interchange with our very powerful neighbours to the south, and at times we have been nearly overwhelmed, but our political structures derive from the Mother of Parliaments and from before Confederation Canadians have been developing our own social and cultural characteristics and we do have a distinctive history.

Comparing Bill 103 and its intentions to the steady state:

(1) Bill 103 assumes municipal government does not work. Why else were the municipal governments put under trusteeship? Why?

(2) Change is to be as sudden and as fast as the Tories can make it. They introduced legislation the week before Christmas. A fault line is introduced into our political life, something not before seen in this province.

(3) The office holders in municipal government and the electorate are not treated with respect by the words and actions of the bill. The same goes for some of the other legislation proposed.

I believe the provincial government should have conducted a referendum on the question of municipal powers before introducing legislation that pre-empts those powers. The current attempts to devalue the need for a referendum and discredit the results show a lack of respect and cynicism for necessary political developments. Why does the provincial government allow the voters' list to get more than three years out of date? Why?

(4) The invitation to concentrate on costs alone attacks the worth of our accomplishments as a city, our sense of history and our sense of ourselves, and it's also a foolish piece of advice.

Why are the interests of this provincial government at odds in so many ways with those of the citizens? Why? Who stands to gain? Investors in hotels perhaps.

The main business at city hall, in my experience, is planning, building applications and permissions, as most of you well know. To do planning in the best interests of all the citizens, you have to have good local knowledge of many different kinds. To do planning in the interests of the developers much less knowledge is required.

Area-wide formula solutions do not work in the interests of citizens. Cities are dynamic places where the problems are always changing into new problems, where answers are often best generated from the midst of the problem. Small is better in city administration.

The restructuring proposed is an unwarranted disturbance to normal development of city administration. It was not asked for by the citizens, was not part of the Tory election platform, nor is it supported by credible expert opinion. It is a massive intervention in our political culture.

The next question is: Will the initial steady state return after the shock of the intervention has passed? I think not. The new political structures may work, and who knows what changes might be required afterwards? The real difference will be that the citizens will know they have not been treated with respect. They will therefore not regard the new order with respect.

There are situations in life where trust, once betrayed, cannot be reconstructed, and it is a woman who tells you this. Should you enforce this bill you will lose whatever potential you have for the good regard of the electorate.

I predict a new steady state manifested as follows: (1) lethargic interest by the public in politics, a pervasive cynicism about the process, this being the result of your continuing contempt for and abuse of the electorate; (2) loss of quality of life; (3) loss of population in the city centre; (4) corruption of politicians becoming more com-

monplace as their power is not modified by the interests of the citizens; (5) loss of productive capacity of the city.

The Trimmer report, the Golden report and the mayors from the municipalities have all advised us with unmistakable sincerity that the proposals in Bill 103 will not work. The consequences of this bill will be far-reaching and will involve us all, some advantageously, many not.

If the voices of all those involved are discounted, who then is qualified to speak? Are you uninvolved?

I have to speak for myself at this point. I've done a certain amount of reading, attended some of these hearings, talked to my friends, and my common sense, life experience and love for my adopted home come into play too. I hope your opinions and actions are the outcome of a similar process. I ask you to reject Bill 103 and start again.

**Mr Len Wood:** Thank you for your presentation. The last line says it all: Bill 103 should be rejected and start over again, that it's flawed and it doesn't seem to do what Mike Harris and his group of people want to do with it.

I'm just concerned. You're saying that smaller is better, that there's more democracy with smaller. I heard in estimates last week, when I was travelling around the

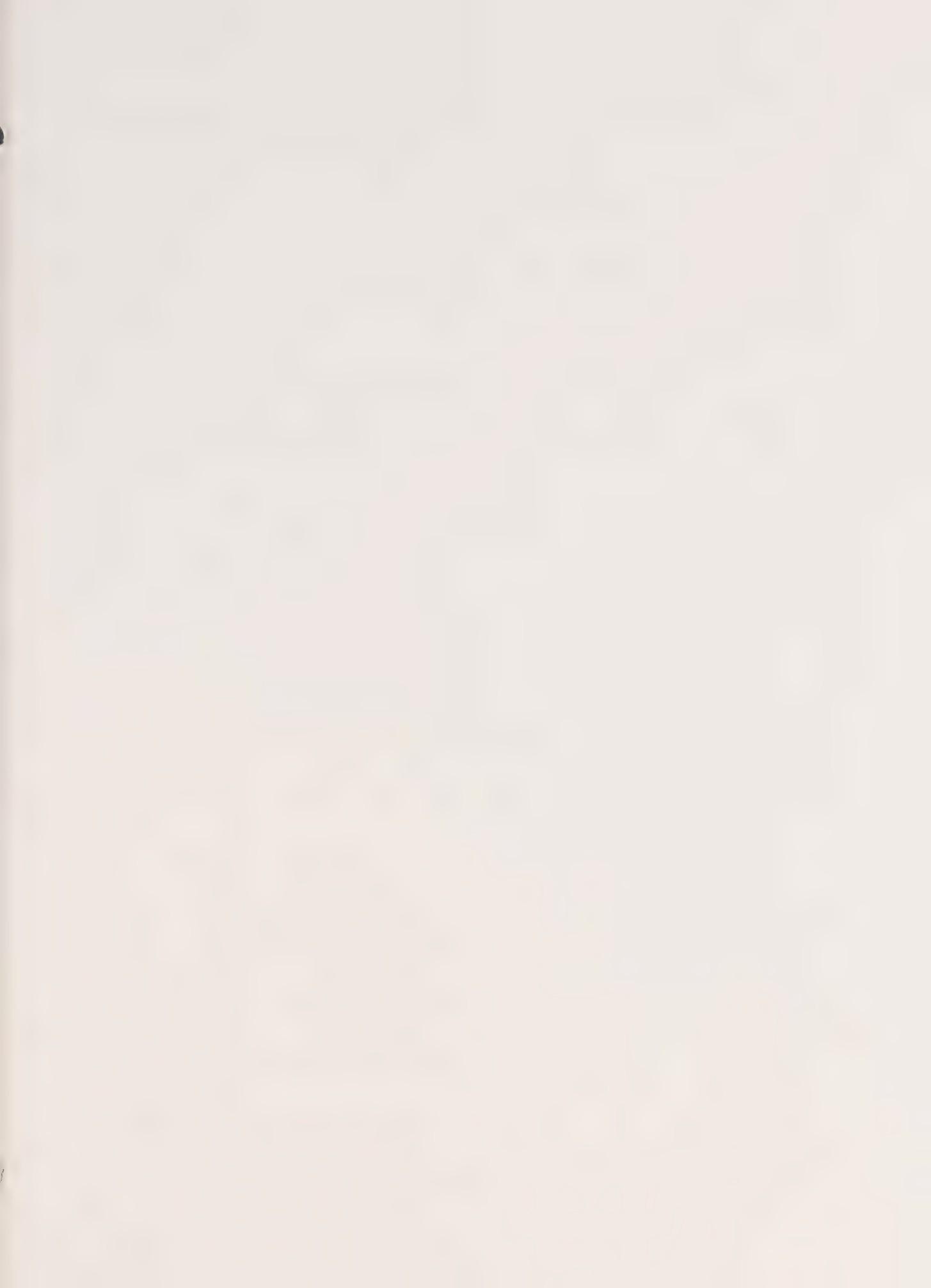
province, that Bill 103 is only a step in a process to probably eliminate 150,000 good paying jobs, whether they be unionized or non-unionized, and have them replaced with contractors or other people out there doing these services, that this is the intention of Bill 103, Bill 104 and all the other bills that are out there.

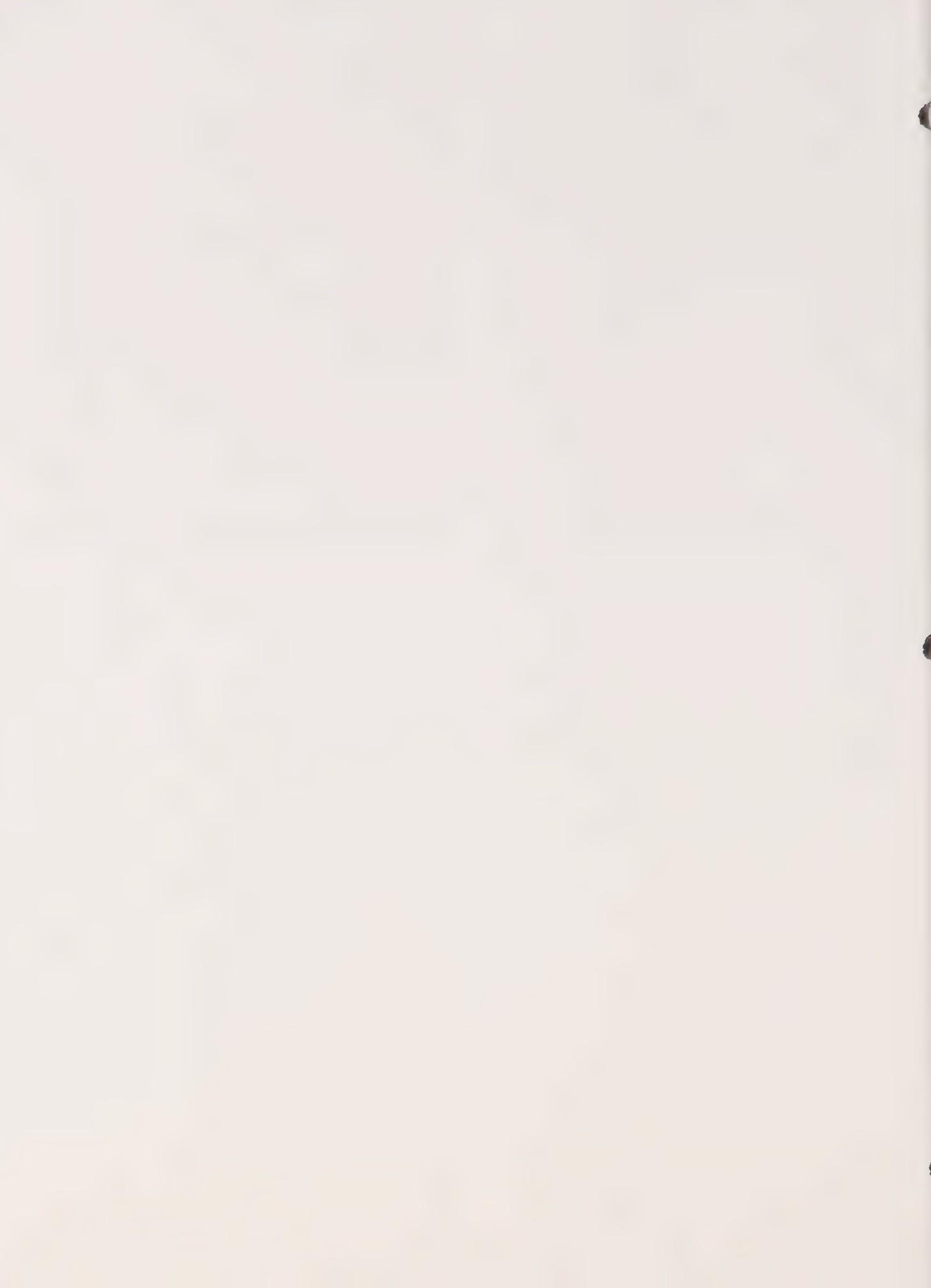
It's a matter of an attack on the ordinary working people, which worries my parents. My children are worried. Everybody is worried about the overall effect when we have a province with 10% unemployed and then we're going to see another 100,000 or 150,000 people replaced by this legislation. I just want you to comment on that.

**Ms Hudson:** Certainly the government makes no secret of its intention to cut government jobs, but it's the function of government that I worry about. The function of government will be changed. It will be turned away from care for the citizens' problems to care for investors who want their redevelopment projects for the city, and the political climate will encourage as much redevelopment as it possibly can.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Hudson, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

This committee is in recess until Wednesday at 9 am.  
*The committee adjourned at 2114.*





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#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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Mr Len	Wood (Cochrane North / -Nord ND)
Mr Terence H.	Young (Halton Centre / -Centre PC)

**Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:**

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Mr Bruce	Crozier (Essex South / -Sud L)
Mr Douglas B.	Ford (Etobicoke-Humber PC)
Mr Steve	Gilchrist (Scarborough East / -Est PC)
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Mr John L.	Parker (York East / -Est PC)
Mr David	Ramsay (Timiskaming L)
Mr Tony	Silipo (Dovercourt ND)

**Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

    Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North / -Nord ND)

**Clerk Pro Tem /**

**Greffière par intérim:** Ms Lisa Freedman

**Staff / Personnel:** Ms Lorraine Luski, Mr Jerry Richmond, Ms Susan Swift, research officers,  
Legislative Research Service

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ISSN 1180-5218

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 36th Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 26 February 1997

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 26 février 1997

Standing committee on  
general government

City of Toronto Act, 1996

Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto



Chair: Bart Maves  
Clerk: Lynn Mellor

Président : Bart Maves  
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Hansard Reporting Service  
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3330 Édifice Whitney ; 99, rue Wellesley ouest  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Wednesday 26 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Mercredi 26 février 1997

*The committee met at 0905 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

METRO TORONTO CHINESE AND  
 SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC  
 CHINESE CANADIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL,  
 TORONTO CHAPTER

**The Chair (Mr Bart Maves):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Our first presenters this morning are Avvy Go and Keith Wong. Welcome to the committee. You have 15 minutes this morning to make your presentation. If there's some time left at the end, I'll ask the government caucus to ask questions.

**Ms Avvy Go:** Good morning. My name is Avvy Go and I'm the clinic director of the Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic.

**Mr Keith Wong:** I'm Keith Wong, the executive director of the Chinese Canadian National Council, Toronto chapter.

**Ms Go:** Our two organizations decided to join together to make a submission to this committee. Part of the reason is that there isn't enough space for everybody, but also that we have some shared concerns because of our mandate and the issues that we work with together. Since the public hearings began three weeks ago, over 2,000 individuals and organizations have asked to speak before this committee on Bill 103 but, as you know, about half of them have been turned away due to the limits imposed on public consultation.

Of all the delegates that have attended the hearings, very few are representatives from the ethnoracial communities and fewer still have spoken directly on the impact of the creation of a megacity on the multicultural communities in the six cities within the Metro Toronto area. For these reasons, the two of us are coming here today to bring to the fore our concerns about the megacity and its potential impact on the ethnoracial communities in Metro Toronto, and in the rest of Ontario for that matter.

Every year over half of Canada's new immigrants choose Metro as the place to settle in Canada, and in

recent years 80% of all the new immigrants who enter Canada are people of colour. By the year 2000, about 50% of the people living in the Metro Toronto area will be racial minorities.

Toronto has been chosen as one of the best cities to live in the world largely because of the diversity represented in the city. Indeed, the entire municipality of Metro Toronto has benefited from the skills, cultures and energy brought by the immigrant communities, which have made Metro an envy of the world. Within this context, it is extremely surprising that Bill 103 is now being slammed through the Legislature by the provincial government without first considering the impact of the megacity on the immigrant communities.

**Mr Wong:** The purpose of Bill 103 is to eliminate six local city councils within Metro Toronto and to replace them with a mega-council. The immediate impact of the elimination of the local councils is the alienation of local communities from the political process. In the case of immigrant communities, the negative impact will be more deeply felt.

The process of integration for new immigrants is such that when they arrive in a new country, they tend to settle in areas already populated by people from the same region or the same country of origin. As the immigrant communities gradually become mature and immigrants become established in the host country, they start to spread out to other parts of the host country.

The demographic pattern of Metro Toronto is thus a reflection of the pattern of migration to the area. One can find clusters of ethnoracial communities throughout Metro, like the Chinatown in the downtown area and the east end, the Little Italy along College and Bathurst, the South Asian community in Toronto east and the Greek community along Danforth, just to name a few. Each of these communities has developed its own pace of life and its own character, and together they form the mosaic that makes Metro Toronto a vibrant place to live.

The immigrants who live in these communities therefore tend to be newcomers and people from the lower end of the economic spectrum. The local governments in turn play an important role in ensuring that the needs of these communities are being addressed. Very often, there is a fairly close contact between the local politicians and the neighbourhood communities. The local council works closely with the community on local problems and issues that are unique to the community.

Examples of such collaboration can be found in the east end Chinatown area, where the local councillors work with restaurants and merchants to implement recycling programs in an effort to reduce garbage produced by local businesses and hence improve the quality

of life for local residents. The initiative has been a great success and received support from the local communities. Such an initiative may be no longer possible once the megacity is in place.

A megacity removed from the local communities will be less able to respond to the needs that affect a small segment of the population. A mega-council with a large constituency may not even see these needs as their priorities. Thus, abolishing the local council structure directly affects the way of life of these residents in the local communities. In the case of immigrant communities, they will lose an effective link to the government and the bureaucracy in power.

**Ms Go:** For many immigrants of colour, racism is a reality that they experience on a daily basis. Racism manifests itself in many different ways on an individual as well as systemic basis. Currently the Metro government and the six cities have each established a standing committee on race relations. Some of the committees are directly accountable to the cities' mayors and these race relations committees act as an liaison between the local governments and the communities to combat hate and improve race relations within the communities. These committees also provide directions to local and sometimes provincial as well as federal government on legal and policy issues that affect the wider immigrant communities.

By the same token, a lot of the anti-racism work within Metro Toronto is driven by local communities with the support of their local councillors. In Riverdale, for instance, the residents have launched many effective campaigns to directly challenge the hate activities undertaken by members of the Heritage Front. Their success lies in the ability of the local community, once again, to respond readily and quickly to counter hate activities.

What will happen to the existing race relations initiatives in the various cities, and what, if any, program will be put in place to make sure that the agenda of equality does not get lost in the new megacity? How can the immigrant and racial minority communities be sure that the elimination of racism remains a priority for the new mega-council? How can the mega-council effectively deal with hate activities in very localized areas targeting members of a specific community? These questions and more are not being addressed by the current proposal under Bill 103. Without first receiving any assurance from the province that they will be addressed, we cannot support the bill as it now stands.

**Mr Wong:** Megacity will also affect the accessibility of the political process to the people within Metro. In an ideal world, democracy means simply that all people have the right to vote for the government they choose. In reality, anyone who has worked on an election campaign would know that our democratic process is far from being perfect and that it suffers from a whole range of problems, one of which is poor electoral participation. The lack of participation is a particular problem for people who are unfamiliar with the political process, among whom are the immigrants to Metro.

Building a megacity is not going to alleviate the problem of voter participation; if anything, it will only worsen the situation. Already, members of marginalized

communities tend not to come out to vote because they feel excluded from the election process. The larger the constituency the harder it is to engage in voter education campaigns to encourage higher participation. Ultimately, the marginalized communities will be even less represented among the electorate.

Across Ontario, the inequity is even more obvious once we start comparing Metro with the rest of the province. The ratio of councillor to constituency will be 10 times higher in Metro than in North Bay. Given once again that 50% of Metro residents are racial minorities, the disproportionate impact on racial minorities as a result of megacity will be more apparent.

**Ms Go:** The megacity proposal is one of the series of announcements made by the provincial government during the mega-week. The government is also proposing to download on to the municipalities a number of programs that currently fall within the responsibility of the province. The downloading of social services, transportation, long-term care, social housing etc will have a particularly adverse impact on low-income and racial minority communities.

Take the Chinese Canadian community as an example. According to the report on Ethno-Racial Inequality in Metropolitan Toronto: Analysis of 1991 Census, which was commissioned by the municipality of Metro Toronto, 19% of all families in Metro Toronto are below the low-income cutoff point, while 24.5% of families of Chinese origin live below that point in Metro. The same report also found out that the mean family income of a Metro family is \$50,600 but that of a family of Chinese origin is only \$38,300.

The stereotypes of rich Hong Kong Chinese therefore do not reflect the reality of our community. Many families of Chinese origin living in poverty have to rely on social assistance to support themselves. New immigrants in particular require various social services during the first few years after their arrival in Canada, and because Metro Toronto attracts the majority of all immigrants who come to Canada every year, the downloading of social services will have a severe impact on the ability of Metro government to meet the needs of immigrants. It is simply irresponsible for the province to devolve social programs without first assessing the potential impact of devolution on the local communities.

The megacity and the related changes that are brought about by this government will fundamentally change our city and our way of life forever. The haste with which this government has implemented such changes is a clear indication that it has very little regard for the people in this community and the future of our municipalities. As demonstrated by the latest ruling on the appointment of trustees, the whole legality of the process by which this government is proceeding is quite questionable.

**Mr Wong:** It is the responsibility of the government to maintain and enhance individual and community wellbeing. What makes all of us strong is that diverse communities can coexist in a society that believes in equality and socioeconomic equity. Bill 103 is an affront to our diverse community and our belief in true democracy and as such it must not be allowed to stand.

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** Thank you very much. I want to remind you that when the minister announced Bill 103, he also mentioned the concept of community councils, by which the council for the city would be subdivided into six regions, with the councillors for each region meeting as a group to address strictly local concerns.

That's roughly parallel to the situation we have now with six municipalities with local councils, the difference being that instead of having two levels, where one level is restricted in what it can do and must defer to another level for certain other responsibilities, here everything feeds into a common pot, so the total council can make all the decisions that have to be made for the total municipality. The participants at the local level will participate at the larger level rather than having the dividing line between the two levels.

Given that, I'm just wondering why there is a concern that somehow the new council will fail to address the particular needs of communities of ethnic groups and minority groups and so on to any particular degree that's greater than the present system. What is lost by going to the new model?

**Ms Go:** I guess what is lost is that each community council — they basically operate on goodwill, not to say that politicians don't operate on goodwill, but they are also directly accountable to the electorate. I find that a lot of the times with the local councillors, part of the reason for having community events or taking initiatives to address community needs is that they know that the next time people will come back to vote for them. So there is an accountability issue here that will not be addressed by setting up community councils. If you really believe there is a need for community councils, that means you believe there is a need for two layers. I don't know how that is different.

0920

**Mr Parker:** Let me be clear. In mentioning a community council, what I'm talking about is a subset of the total municipal council, so that six, seven or eight — I forget the number — a subset of the total council would meet to address strictly local concerns in the subdivision they happen to represent. They would be able to meet directly with the residents of that area and address their concerns the same way a municipal council does now. I'm asking you, why would that model be any less responsive to local concerns than the situation we have now?

**Ms Go:** Because they're working with a much larger constituency. They are directly accountable to a much larger area. Let's say in the Chinatown situation, they are talking about working with the merchants on Gerrard Street. It's a very localized situation. If you have a councillor who has to be accountable to 100,000 people or whatever, they are not going to be able to deal with the tiny area that we're talking about, where the real change, the real work is being done: picking up the garbage, the recycling program. That kind of an initiative and little pockets of initiatives like that will be lost. You're talking about the mega-work, mega-recycling program, mega-whatever project, which is not directly

answerable to the pockets of residents who live in different areas throughout Metro Toronto.

**Mr Parker:** If you're talking about a ratio —

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Parker, we've gone beyond the allotted time. I want to thank you both for coming forward to make your presentation to the committee today.

#### SUMMERHILL RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

**The Chair:** Would John Bossons please come forward. Good morning, Mr Bossons, welcome to the committee.

**Mr John Bossons:** Mr Maves, members of the committee, I represent an association of residents who live close to the centre of town between Bloor Street and St Clair. We're a very active association, as are many residents' groups in the centre of the city. Because of the nature of living in the centre of the city, there are always pressures. In order to keep the quality of residential neighbourhoods that has made Toronto so attractive as a place to live, it's very important that residents' groups can band together and work with the local municipality to keep Toronto's neighbourhoods of high quality.

I think Toronto has done a fantastic job of doing that and I give a lot of credit for that to the responsiveness in the city of Toronto, the city of Toronto council and, in other parts of Metro, to the local councils there. They are responsive to the concerns of residents and the governments have, I think, been very effective in finding ways of responding to those concerns while at the same time accommodating the pressures of development, the needs for change etc.

I think that is reflected in the rating Fortune magazine gave. It has undoubtedly been quoted to you many times but it's a fact. Toronto is a city that works well. As such, one has to ask, and certainly my neighbours are asking, if Toronto is a city that works so well, if Toronto is a city that's rated as the best place to live and work in North America by a magazine like Fortune, and if we know ourselves that the city works well, why change it? Why change something that's working well? I guess that is really the point I want to emphasize.

I know there are problems that need to be addressed in the GTA. There are problems that need to be addressed in the province concerning, within the GTA, the need for a regional government of some form — call it a GTA services board — the need for disentangling especially provincial and municipal functions, and the need to address the tax problems of the GTA, which, as everybody knows, are the key problems which really led to the formation of things such as the GTA task force chaired by Anne Golden. There are problems; they need to be addressed. Does Bill 103 solve those problems? Does it keep what is good? I don't believe the answer is yes to either of those two questions, so let me deal with the first.

What does it do to solve the true governance problem of the GTA, which, as everybody from Anne Golden to the board of trade has recognized, is the lack of a regional government? In other words, the problem here is the mistake that was made by the Davis government back in the early 1970s of setting up regional governments

around Metro instead of extending the regional government to cover all of Metro. Does it solve that problem? No, it just focuses on rearrangements of functions within the existing Metro Toronto.

Does it deal with the problem of disentanglement? Obviously Bill 103 doesn't as such, but do the other reforms which go along with it do that? Yes, in part, and I give the government credit for starting to deal with the disentanglement problem. But I fault the government for undoing the benefits of what it's done in the disentanglement of hard services by providing worse entanglement of provincial and municipal functions on welfare. David Crombie, I think, said this best when he said it's wrong in principle and devastating in practice to move welfare down to the local level.

Finally, on the issue of taxes, the issue of the over-taxation of business assessment in Toronto, and not just in downtown Toronto, which is often focused on but especially in the industrial areas of North York, Scarborough and Etobicoke, where taxes that are twice as high per square foot as they are north of Steeles are driving industry out and in a very inefficient way: Does this do anything to that? No. The whole megacity package is doing the reverse, because the benefits that may come, that should come from a uniform tax on business assessment for education across the province are being undone, and more than undone, by the effects of downloading welfare.

As I say, is the whole package solving the key problems of GTA governance, disentanglement and tax distortions within the GTA? No. Is it keeping what is good? No, because within Metro it is simply amalgamating all of the local governments into Metro.

I would urge this committee to recommend to the government that it go back to basic principles, basically to how to deal effectively with those three problems; that it expand on what is being recommended for a weak GTSB to make that a true regional government, not a regional government with separately elected representatives but rather a regional government as in the Metro of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, where local councillors were members of Metro council. In other words, indirect election worked well. I believe Metro worked well. The problem was simply that Metro was not expanded to keep pace with the expansion of the GTA.

The residents in my area are very concerned about Bill 103 and the attendant other reforms that are associated in the so-called megacity package. They're very concerned about the downloading. They're concerned about the extent to which taxes in the Toronto area, in Metro Toronto, will be increased. They fear that the effect of all of this will be to make Toronto a less attractive place to live and work, and that by not addressing the tax problems of the area and by exacerbating them, this package of reforms is pushing us in the direction of US cities, where the kind of deindustrialization that's occurring now in Scarborough, Etobicoke and North York was allowed to keep on going and made worse by bad tax policy there, resulting in a downward spiral of the US cities.

There's a lot of fear out there. There's also a lot of concern about the process, about the speed with which the government is trying to push through very important

reforms. People in my area are pretty unanimous in saying to you: "Please, slow down. Do this right. It's too important. Quite frankly, you're not addressing the real problems of the region with this bill. You're doing something which makes the responsiveness of local government worse and is not doing anything to solve the problems of the region."

0930

**Mr Mike Colle (Oakwood):** Thank you, Mr Bossons. I guess originally this whole exercise, going back 10 or 15 years ago, started about trying to get rid of the tax gap between the 416 and the 905. I know you referred to that in saying that this proposal, Bill 103, which basically talks about the internal workings of Metro and its relationship with its six cities, does nothing to alleviate that gap; in fact, it entrenches the disparity between 416 and 905. Could you try and explain how it does that just in a bit more detail, because I think it's a salient point.

**Mr Bossons:** That's absolutely right. The key problem in the region is that the boundaries are totally artificial. It makes no sense to think in terms of different tax regimes north and south of Steeles. What that is saying is there's a need for a unified approach to tax policy, to regional problems, to transportation planning, to all those things in the region, and that we therefore need an upper tier that can deal with those. It seems to me that is the nub of the problem. The boundaries are totally artificial, and had we continued to have a single upper tier for the entire region, we wouldn't have these problems of tax policy we have now.

**Mr Colle:** I guess what the government is saying — they've set up Milt Farrow to set up what I call the mutual debating society. What do we need there at that GTA level?

**Mr Bossons:** I think we need leadership from the province there. I would hope that the government members of this committee will see that partly as a result of, if you like, the shock value of Bill 103, attitudes have changed in the 905 area as well as in the 416 area. I think there is much more responsiveness now to the idea of setting up a real regional government and addressing regional problems than there was four months ago. I think the idea of the 905 having to deal with a monolithic Metro government is something which in their view is going to make it difficult to join a regional government. It's important to see that there are now, partly as a result of the fears that have been created by Bill 103, opportunities for the government to use leadership to get us a regional government that really addresses regional problems.

**Mr Colle:** Hazel McCallion has said that this is a mega-monster mistake because it just takes the whole thing out of balance when you've got a 2.3 million monster in the middle, with the cities of Mississauga, Brampton, some of them of the 100,000 size, so there's not going to be balance there.

You certainly support, you said, an indirect type of election, the way Metro was originally formed. Should they have taxing powers in order to alleviate this gap between the 905 and the 416?

**Mr Bossons:** I think the idea of taxing powers as such is a bit of a red herring. A regional government is going

to have to raise money to deal with regional issues. If it's responsible for solid waste disposal, it's going to have to pay for the garbage dump. If it's responsible for GO, it's going to have to pay for the deficit in GO. It's going to have to get that money. Whether you call that a tax or whether you call that an apportionment to the member municipalities is really just semantics. It's going to have to raise money, regardless of what it's called. I think the distinctions that Milt Farrow makes in his report are really kind of distinctions without a difference.

**Mr Colle:** I guess the key area of social service is downloading, which puts a disproportionate amount of pressure on the Metro taxpayer. How should this GTA governance body, or whatever you want to call it, deal with that issue of apportioning costs for services across the GTA and the payment of those services, like long-term care, welfare, family benefits, drug benefits? How should it deal with that?

**Mr Bossons:** First of all, if those are left down at the municipal level, then yes, indeed, they're going to have to be pooled across the region. There's just no way out of that. Otherwise, the deindustrialization of Metro is going to continue. The board of trade has argued for that as a second best. Anybody who has looked at that has said you're going to be forced into pooling unless you address the real problem, which is the downloading.

I would argue the real solution is to eliminate the downloading of welfare, and I think there's a way of paying for that, incidentally, which David Crombie suggested in his earlier letter on education some months ago, which is to make municipalities responsible for paying for the capital costs of schools; in other words, making the municipal budget responsible for the school buildings, school maintenance, that kind of basic school infrastructure, which, after all, makes all kinds of sense to combine with community centres and other things to get cost efficiencies and service efficiencies. If you do that, I think there's actually enough money there as a download of those services to make it possible to upload all of welfare.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Bossons, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee.

#### PAULA FLETCHER

**The Chair:** Would Paula Fletcher please come forward. Good morning, Ms Fletcher. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Paula Fletcher:** I'd like to thank the committee for this opportunity to appear here this morning. I'll start by saying: "There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and pride? I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger municipalities." I happen to agree with this statement that Mike Harris made in October 1994, less than a year before the 1995 election.

In 1996, Premier Harris made the announcement that the six cities of Toronto, East York, Scarborough, York, North York and Etobicoke would be forced to amalgamate into one city to be called Toronto. Why destroy our roots and pride?

In December, Bill 103 was introduced, which not only forces amalgamation but, when passed, will put our entire democratically elected government structure in the municipality of Toronto under trusteeship. Trusteeship is usually reserved for those who have gone bankrupt or those who have broken the law. I don't believe that the city of Toronto is bankrupt or has broken a law. The court ruling yesterday on the trustees stands as a warning that this legislation was hastily drafted and needs to be rethought. I would ask the government to slow down and consult.

Is there anything to be gained by the government's moving so fast and without proper consultation? Yesterday even Bob Runciman was feeling the consequences of the government's blitzkrieg approach. He bemoaned the fact that there was no community consultation on the closure of a hospital in his riding. Welcome to the club, Bob. Let's work together to get this government to take a deep breath, slow down and consult with communities and residents on the big issues that will determine the quality of life in our communities now and for future generations.

The rationale for amalgamation has been increased efficiency in the delivery of services. So too was the rationale to amalgamate the service delivery of the FSP, the family support plan. Last fall we all witnessed the painful closure and amalgamation of eight regional family support offices that served thousands, that employed 290 people and made a healthy profit for the government. The government was warned early on by those administering the plan and those making use of the plan that it was not broken and did not need fixing. The plan was making a profit. But someone had decreed that it happen, so from August to November, chaos reigned.

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Women were unable to get through to the new 1-800 line that was set up. Files, including cheques, were stuffed into boxes. Families were unable to get the money to live on and were being forced on to welfare. The minister responsible for the FSP blamed problems on computer glitches and insisted there were no problems, but when all was said and done and the pictures were published, the emperor truly had no clothes. I agree with what Mike Harris said in October 1994: Bigger is not better.

Perhaps the minister had been told there were no problems, just as government members are being asked to keep the faith on Bill 103 as having no problems. Every time I think of those pictures of the offices with boxes overflowing with documents that affect people's everyday lives, of the offices simply not set up, of desks overturned, simply of the entire mess, I fear that this will be the scene in the offices of the proposed megacity if this bill goes through.

Slow down and consult. I don't want to live under a forced restructuring that is poorly thought out, hastily executed, and then be lied to about the absence of problems.

I want to tell the committee a little bit about my neighbourhood. It is a very active community in east Toronto. We have a very busy community life with a strong residents' association, home and school, and community

centre. We can pick up the phone at any time and get in touch with our city councillor or school trustee, and they work hard on our behalf.

As a community, we put a lot of effort into major projects. Over 500 children and adults participated in our annual Winterfest this year. Many of us believe that the strongest, safest community is one in which people know one another and work together in the community, one where they know one another's children and work together for all children in the community.

In Bill 103 and also Bill 104, neighbourhood councils and parent councils are being legislated. While Bill 103 is very vague on neighbourhood councils, it seems to me there is a strong element of administration and management projected for these councils. That work is presently being done out of our councillors' offices, and it seems it will fall to the community councils, which are volunteer groups.

There has been no community consultation about this arrangement. Will this simply add another layer of bureaucracy while local agencies and associations will have to deliver, on a volunteer basis, a level of municipal service? Can community members carry out management and administration on top of the countless hours of volunteer work already being done? How will such councils be approved, elected or set up? There has been no indication. Saying that this will be decided later on is simply not acceptable. Slow down. Consult.

I, for one, am happy with the current arrangement of division of responsibilities. With this new legislation and the cutback of ridings to 44, my new ward will have 50,000 people to be served by one elected official for all municipal matters. Is there any other municipality where there is one for 50,000? In North Bay, a city of 50,000, there is more than one elected municipal representative. In Sault Ste Marie, which is my home town of 60,000, there is more than one municipal representative for every 50,000 people. I don't believe it is fair to increase the ratio and transfer responsibilities to a neighbourhood council. Once again, I am in a position to agree with Mike Harris in what he used to say: "I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better."

Lastly, I want to talk for a minute about the referendum. I was glad when the government agreed to hold off on Bill 103 until after the referendum. Now the government should agree to respect the outcomes of the referendums. I am disheartened by the rather two-faced approach that the government seems to be taking to the referendum. There is referendum legislation now in place that was placed there by this provincial government. Many government members have actively promoted referendums as being a more pure form of democracy. Why is there such a fuss over this referendum? Why is there a declaration that we can have our referendum but the results will not be taken into consideration? How can referendum legislation be brought in one year and then the government declares it is disinterested in the results and refuses to take them into consideration when making sweeping legislative changes the following year?

One could speculate that the province is unable to fight the referendum on the merits of the case, or is unwilling to, and as a last resort is attempting to discredit our

referendum process, a process that itself is set out by the province in legislation and where the voters' list is established by the province.

Shouldn't we all be agreeing to abide by the referendum results, to work within these results? If it is a No result, then the bill should be withdrawn and all parties go back to the drawing-board to negotiate to make the necessary changes, including addressing some of the fundamental problems GTA-wide: transportation, water, sewage, taxation and services. A divided house is never a strong house. Slow down and consult. I am prepared to live with the results of the referendum no matter what the outcome. Please tell me, will all of you?

**Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt):** Ms Fletcher, we should just correct one point, because I know there was some consternation on the part of the government side. They actually haven't passed a referendum law yet, but they're going through a process in one of the other committees which will lead to a law being passed because they are committed to doing that. But interestingly enough, when it comes to the question of referendum as it would apply on the basis of citizen-initiated referenda to something like the amalgamation of Metropolitan Toronto, I should tell you that the government members are contorting themselves all over the place to ensure that the new proposal that would come forward would not allow a citizen-initiated referendum to happen in Metropolitan Toronto unless you got agreement from across the province on the 10% threshold they are suggesting. They have turned down an amendment I proposed that would have done that.

**Ms Fletcher:** Thank you for correcting me.

**Mr Silipo:** You're quite welcome. I want to ask you on that very point, because it doesn't detract at all from your argument around the government needing to respect — we have a situation here in which the government has been found to be in contempt, the court has now told it that the trusteeship process they've set up is illegal, and they are still saying they won't respect even the results of the referendum. What's your reaction to all of that?

**Ms Fletcher:** Of course the government should respect the results of the referenda. As I indicated, I am prepared as a citizen to accept them. If it's yes, I will accept that, and if it's no, I will accept that. I feel that has to be taken very seriously by the government and by the other parties in the Legislature and that the bill should go back to the drawing-board at that point.

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Thank you very much for appearing here today, Ms Fletcher. We've exhausted our time.

JOHN BELYEA

**The Vice-Chair:** I call on John Belyea, please. Good morning, Mr Belyea, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr John Belyea:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, committee, for allowing me the opportunity to speak before this committee and give my opinions on Bill 103, which is currently being discussed. This is a very important bill, obviously. It's important that we get input from all citizens — that's why I'm here today — and to hear

the input of those who are for and those who are against. This is a necessity, an important part of our democratic process. I hope this committee and the government will take note of the constructive suggestions and make amendments where appropriate.

I'm a resident of Toronto; I've lived in north Toronto now for about 13 years. It's a very strong neighbourhood, and the neighbourhood is really defined by the schools, by the parks we have, by the restaurants, the stores etc, but perhaps most important, it's defined by the people. In my neighbourhood, I'm surprised — I shouldn't say "surprised" — to see the number of families, people who have lived in that area for generations. It's a very strong neighbourhood. This is despite the fact that north Toronto is not just in Toronto; it straddles North York, really an artificial barrier through our area.

I very much love the city I live in and very much care about the place where my young family, my 15-month-old son, is going to grow up. I want there to be a future for him. I want there to be a city that's strong, vibrant and viable and recognized worldwide, as it is today, as one of the best places to live and work on this planet. This is why I'm here today supporting Bill 103 and amalgamation of the present seven levels of government into one strong, unified entity.

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I want to focus on three points in terms of why I think that amalgamation makes sense. First of all, it's for a strong voice. There are presently seven voices speaking for Metro and these are often conflicting, contradictory, rarely agreeing. This is mainly because of political differences, not because of local circumstances. This really results in a weak position, particularly when defending the interests of our area in front of federal and provincial governments. With the changes being made at the federal level and at the provincial level, particularly with the restructuring of the funding and the way services are to be delivered, it's very important we as an area approach this as one strong, unified voice. The new mayor of the amalgamated Toronto will be one of the stronger politicians in this province, if not the country. It's that type of strong voice and leadership that we're going to require as we move forward.

The second reason is reducing duplication, waste and saving money. Presently we have six fire departments, six garbage collection services, seven parks and recreation departments, seven road maintenance operations and so on. This duplication is incredibly wasteful and very costly to the taxpayers in the current city. Rolling these services under a unified government will save money. There can be no question about this. I'm not aware of anyone who's arguing that the current amalgamated services, such as transit, policing, ambulance, water and sewer, be devolved back down to the city level. They're more efficiently carried out at the Metro level. Not even the latest mayors' report that came out late last fall calling for the elimination of Metro called for the elimination of these amalgamated services. The same argument logically would dictate that the other services I referred to earlier would be centralized and brought together, and clear savings will be made.

One area of considerable debate is, what are the exact savings? The government said there would be \$865 million over the next three years and \$300 million rolling on an annual basis thereafter. Opponents have said that actually there will be no savings and it's going to be much more costly to bring services together. I think these are both extreme positions; the truth probably lies somewhere in between. I think it's fair to say there definitely will be savings.

The opponents also seem to decry that we're going to lose 4,000 jobs, that 4,000 jobs will be eliminated as we amalgamate these services and make delivery more efficient. Well, 4,000 jobs are a salary cost to the various municipal governments. Using my calculation, that's \$160 million right there. If they're going to use the argument that jobs are going to be lost, I suspect they should also say that money will be saved.

The final reason I'm supporting this is that we're pretty much already there. It's hard to understand how opponents to amalgamation say it's going to destroy our cities. Already 72% of the expenditures on services at the municipal level are delivered by Metro and it's time to bring those remaining services under one umbrella. The average citizen does not understand which level of government provides services now and they will not notice it after. The entity that collects their garbage, plows their streets in the wintertime or the fire department that responds to a fire situation in their neighbourhood — those things are not going to change just because those services are moved from the city level as it currently exists to the amalgamated level. We seem to have a pretty good police department in the city and it functions very well on a Metro-wide basis. There's absolutely no reason any of these other services wouldn't work the same way.

Unification in our Toronto area has really been an evolutionary process. It started many years ago. Certainly you could point back to the 1950s with the creation of the Metro level of government. We saw many small, independent communities swallowed up by all the current six cities and those communities legally disappeared from the map. However, these communities, such as Leaside, Swansea, Forest Hill, Weston, have not lost their identities and are even stronger today than they were before they were swallowed up. I'd love to know what Mayor Barbara Hall's position would be today if we were to wind the clock back a few years, when the town of Forest Hill was absorbed into the city, whether she would be in favour of amalgamating that city or leaving it separate and independent. I have not heard her comments on that.

My community in north Toronto is really no different. The elimination of an artificial boundary is not going to destroy my neighbourhood. My neighbourhood is not defined by the boundary between my city and North York, which is three blocks away, which happens to cut through people's backyards. I consider those people my neighbourhood. I think they consider all of us in the same neighbourhood. What makes our neighbourhood strong will continue in the future and in fact may become even stronger under what the government's proposing here. I think it's fair to say that those who say that neighbourhoods will be destroyed by this legislation, by the

amalgamation, really have no faith in the people who make up those neighbourhoods. It is the people.

I've been a little disheartened by the way this debate has turned out, particularly with some of the debate coming from the opponents of amalgamation. It seems that the volume is rising on a daily basis, with ever more outlandish statements and claims being made about how our city is going to be destroyed. While these opponents criticize the government for the supposed lack of concrete facts for the benefits of amalgamation, they offer not one shred of credible evidence to back up their claims.

Just the other night I heard Margaret Atwood claim that amalgamation would lead to the evisceration and evacuation of Toronto. I'm not sure exactly what she meant in that statement, but I think it's pretty irresponsible and it's backed by absolutely no facts. I don't know if she thinks the 700,000-odd people in this city are just going to leave the day this legislation is passed. This language she used and others have used is really the same language that opponents of free trade used in that debate nine years ago, and history has proven those arguments wrong and will also prove those opposed to amalgamation wrong in the years to come.

That's all I have to say. Thank you.

**Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre):** Thank you, Mr Belyea, for that excellent presentation. You didn't touch on the referendum. The previous presenter suggested that the government respect the results of the referendum. You're from the city of Toronto?

**Mr Belyea:** Yes.

**Mr Newman:** What are your thoughts on the referendum?

**Mr Belyea:** I certainly have opinions on it; I didn't want to cover everything in my presentation. The referendum, if carried out in a proper way, could be viewed as a viable exercise. But the way the cities, whether it be Toronto or the others, have approached it causes a problem for me. I cast my ballot, but I was little appalled to see my name on a little sticker on the envelope it goes into. As much as they claim there will be privacy, I'm not sure of that.

When we're voting for municipal politicians, federal or provincial, it is truly a secret ballot; there are no names associated. I'm not sure the whole referendum process that's being carried through is a very viable one.

There's a lot of discussion going on — there's discussion here today — and this is a very valuable way for us to put forward constructive comments on the legislation. My concern, and I tried to touch on it in my last point, is that there has not been a lot of constructive discussion and debate on it. It's: "Stop. It's wrong. It's going to destroy us." I haven't heard any viable options. Even the six mayors in their report admitted that the status quo is not sustainable and that there has to be change. Then let's hear what we should move to.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Belyea, for coming forward to make your presentation.

#### ELIZABETH LUMLEY

**The Chair:** Would Elizabeth Lumley please come forward. Good morning, Ms Lumley. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Elizabeth Lumley:** Good morning, honourable members. Thank you for holding this hearing. I want to thank you for choosing to participate fully in representative democracy by running for office and by taking on the responsibility of managing the interests of all the citizens of Ontario. You act on our behalf.

I'm here today to speak for democracy and against Bill 103, the proposed amalgamation of the city of Toronto. I am speaking to you as a parent, as a former teacher and as a citizen not only of Toronto and the city of York but of Canada. It is primarily as a citizen of Canada that I want to address the issue of democracy.

The United Nations Association of Canada declares: "The values we share and aspire to as Canadians — respect for the rule of law and the dignity of the person, fairness and equitable treatment, tolerance and the acceptance of diversity, and the fundamental principle of democratic participation — are inherent both in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights identifies numerous rights and freedoms, from the right of due process to a right to the preservation of one's culture."

I believe that our cities and their form of local democracy are part of our culture and part of our right to self-determination. I believe our courts are part of our right to due process.

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What Bill 103 does is to abolish democracy by imposing an appointed board of trustees and an appointed transition team whose decisions "are final and shall not be reviewed or questioned by a court," whose decisions usurp the power of existing elected officials. To appoint a body that is not accountable to the courts is to start on the slippery slope towards dictatorship. When any society abrogates human rights for any reason, there is a real risk of disaster.

The Holocaust occurred because of the gradual erosion of human rights and freedoms and the rise of a dictatorship. We must remember all the Canadians soldiers who died overseas during the Second World War in the belief that democracy must be defended with their lives. In Germany at the end of the war, when good, decent citizens were asked, "How could you have allowed this to happen?" they said: "We didn't know. We didn't know."

Here in Canada, at the end of the 20th century, we do know. We do know how easily human rights and freedoms can be eroded. We do know as citizens that it is our responsibility to notice when such rights and freedoms are being taken away from us or anybody else, and that is why we, as citizens, so strongly oppose the proposed legislation.

We also know that the wholesale disruption of a culture and of its right to self-determination has a devastating effect on the children of that culture. We have only to look at 500 years of solutions being imposed on aboriginal peoples, including the recent residential school solution, to know that imposed solutions, ignoring the rights of individuals, leave a legacy of despair rather than hope.

When a government introduces legislation that creates a body of people, whether the board of trustees and the

transition team on the municipal level or the Education Improvement Commission at the provincial level, a body of people that is not representative, that is not elected and not accountable, we are dissolving democracy and we are violating our principle that we are all equal under the law, not above the law. We are annihilating the existing culture and heritage which we have to pass on to our children. We are creating the same arbitrary conditions which first nations have faced.

In 1991 Canada signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 5 articulates "the state's duty to respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and of the wider family to provide guidance appropriate to the child's evolving capacities." Parents have the right to provide guidance.

The package of bills which the Ontario government has recently introduced dissolves true elected representation, representation which allows parents to provide guidance appropriate to the child's evolving capacities, whether through municipal or educational planning. Consequently, it violates the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and thus violates Canadian agreement with a world body. The proposed legislation must consequently be withdrawn.

I have mentioned the international and national documents that must affect our decisions as Canadian citizens. I want to mention some documents that apply to many Ontario citizens. These are the regulations that pertain to education and the teaching profession, part of the wider family referred to in the UN document.

Excerpts from the regulations made under the Teaching Profession Act include: "A member shall endeavour to inculcate in his pupils an appreciation of the principles of democracy; concern himself with the welfare of his pupils while they are under his care; present in the proper manner to the proper authorities the consequences to be expected from policies or practices which in his professional opinion are seriously detrimental to the interests of pupils; recognize a responsibility to promote respect for human rights."

Teachers, then, by the very ethics of their profession, are bound to oppose legislation that is undemocratic, which is not in the best interests of the pupil. Since they are also bound to present the consequences to be expected from policies or practices which in their professional opinion are seriously detrimental to the interests of pupils, they are bound to articulate in what ways this legislation harms children. They are also bound to promote human rights.

In other words, what teachers are obliged to do out of professional responsibility and what parents have the right to do, that is, provide guidance for their children, may run counter to the government's position and to its legislation. If we allow this legislation — and I mean Bills 103 and 104 — we potentially create a situation in which the unelected, unaccountable, unreviewable boards of trustees consider those who promote democracy, that is, teachers, as political dissidents. We do not need Stalin, we do not need Tiananmen Square, we do not need the suppression of political dissidents. What we do need is an active citizenship, whether teachers or others, promoting

the best interests of the child and of its culture, that is, democracy.

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Ms Lumley. We've actually come to the end of your time. I wonder if you could perhaps just wrap up quickly in your own words. We have the two paragraphs that we could read.

**Ms Lumley:** All right. Yesterday an announcement was made that the courts unappointed the board of trustees until the proposed act has been acclaimed. It is because we have the courts that we have some hope of safeguarding human rights and democracy. Regardless of whether the referendum results are yes or no, this legislation violates human rights and must be withdrawn.

I urge you to vote with your conscience and vote against both these bills. I urge you, as Canadian citizens and members of the larger global community, to adhere to the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to support, not destroy, the democratic process. I urge you to care for the children of this province by encouraging the democratic culture we live in. I urge you, as you vote on the numerous other bills which this government has introduced, to consider the impact each bill will have on the welfare of each child in this province. I urge you to vote with integrity.

Thank you for the interest and energy you bring to this issue.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Lumley, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

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#### JUNE MACDONALD

**The Chair:** Would June Macdonald please come forward. Good morning. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms June Macdonald:** Good morning, everybody. The changes this government has made have already had a profound effect on my life. I live in the core of the city, not a dozen blocks away. Increasingly in the past year there have been more and more people on the street asking me for money. Early in the mornings when I go for a walk, I find shop doorways on Yonge Street packed with young people sleeping in substantial numbers. This is my home and I hate this. I don't for one minute think they want to be there.

I feel the downloading of social services will make this a lot worse. Currently we feel the sting of the education part of our property tax but we know it's going for something of infinite value: a child's education. Will we feel the same forbearance about welfare? I don't think so.

I was born in this city, I love it and I don't want to leave, but if this keeps up, how can I not leave? I can't bear to see this misery every day. I live right down here.

I personally feel the taxes I paid were well worth it. I don't see our taxes as excessive when I see the benefits we get from them. I also feel the speed of the changes that we're undertaking is really unacceptable.

My major point is to the mandate of the government to make these profound changes. The government consistently states that it has a majority and the legal right to enact Bill 103. This mandate is the product of an antiquated electoral system which has been rejected as undemocratic by the majority of the world's democracies.

Very few jurisdictions retain this winner-take-all system, where we here in Ontario give a minority of people — the 45% who voted for the Conservatives — a full 82 seats when the majority, who voted against the government, make do with a mere 46 seats. Is this fair? It's not in my book and it's not in those countries that have a proportional system of government, such radical countries as Germany, France, Australia and New Zealand, all of which have a form of proportional representation which does not allocate all votes on a winner-take-all basis.

Interestingly, New Zealand has just instituted a form of proportional representation following an extended period of policies which are remarkably similar to those which are being instituted here in Ontario.

Our system can work and has worked in the past because we have been blessed by leaders who recognize the inequity created by our electoral system and conduct themselves accordingly. When they don't, we no longer have representative government or the hallowed rep by pop; we have something quite ugly.

I would personally like to see the present bill rescinded, or the steps towards it stopped, and replaced by a bill that would retain the present cities as constituted and extend a Metro-like government jurisdiction over the whole 905 area. I'd like to see the tax structure retained as it is at present, and I'd like to see some more continuity of services like the TTC. Because I live in the core, I find I use my car very little; I use the TTC a lot and I use a bicycle a lot. I find that this means of transportation is not a priority for people in other areas. This is where local government serves me personally very well.

Finally, I'd like to see the government institute a form of proportional representation for the next election so the proportion of sitting members is more representative of the people who voted. Maybe then we can prevent such major upheavals, like we're all going through now, after each new government is elected.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We have several minutes for questions from the Liberal caucus, starting with Mr Sergio and then Mr Colle.

**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** Thanks for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. On January 28, in answer to some questions, I suppose, Mr Harris was quoted, "What's etched in stone is that we are not going to increase the burden on provincial taxes." That's his quote. Then he went on to say, "We believe we can control the cost and ensure that property taxes won't go up." Have you seen anything that would give us this assurance from the government side?

**Ms Macdonald:** No, I haven't. Again I don't have any hard facts on this, but you live a certain length of time and you see trends, and taxes don't seem to go down.

**Mr Sergio:** Would you say the downloading is a sort of tax on the local municipality?

**Ms Macdonald:** Yes, and I think the taxes may go down because people just won't pay that, and then I really believe we'll get a hollowing out of the city, much as they do in many of the American cities, because the ratepayers just won't pay for social services. It won't be the same. It's a real nuisance to pay all the money that

we pay for education tax, but we pay it because it's for a good cause, but I don't think we're going to pay it.

**Mr Sergio:** If you were the government and you thought that taxes would go down, wouldn't you give that information out to the public, to us, to everybody so you can really show that indeed what you're proposing is going to decrease taxes, is going to maintain or increase the levels of services? Why do you think the government has not provided that information? Maybe they don't have it. What do you think?

**Ms Macdonald:** I think it's possible they don't have it. Things are happening too fast. I don't think things are being done very efficiently, and that's a big problem with all of this. I don't see the efficiencies taking place and I see a lot of things happening like they happened in New Zealand. But before people wake up and hear the penny drop, all this will have happened and it'll be in place just like free trade; it's done, it's a done deal and we can't do anything about it. That's what I really worry about.

**Mr Colle:** Ms Macdonald, you made some very interesting points in terms of your references to the need for perhaps looking at systems like proportional representation. I think the most intriguing comment you made was that in the past we have had governments that have maintained majorities, but it seems that they conducted themselves a little differently from this government in that they, as you said, conducted themselves accordingly. In other words, my sense of what you were saying is that even though they had a majority, they still respected the fact that they didn't have complete power, that they still had to respect the rights of the minority.

**Ms Macdonald:** Yes, exactly.

**Mr Colle:** It's interesting; the court decision rendered by Mr Justice Brennan yesterday I think further points to the attitude of this government in how they conduct themselves. As you know, when they were presenting before the judge, the government's position was that in essence they could appoint these trustees even before the law was passed because, their argument was, they had this residual discretionary, arbitrary authority, which in essence is the royal prerogative. That's the defence they used, that they could do these things because they had the royal prerogative.

It's interesting; in his response Judge Brennan was quite unequivocal. He said, "It seems to me contrary to fundamental principles of responsible government to invoke the royal prerogative without advertizing to it." Perhaps we're seeing a shift here, that now majority governments mean you also have a so-called underlying royal prerogative. How is this going to fit in terms of hearing from the minority or people who didn't vote for this government?

**Ms Macdonald:** I think this is why people are so concerned about the loss of democracy. It hasn't clicked in that this appearance of a lack of democracy really is a lack of democracy and it's integral in this antiquated electoral system that we have. It's only a few countries in the world that have it — very, very few. Apparently it's only Britain and the United States that have it, and the United States has essentially a two-party system, so it doesn't have the same impact. We really are out of step with what everybody else is doing, which is why people

are so concerned about the lack of democracy, because that's what really is happening when you have this government which invokes this royal prerogative. It's really very dangerous, I think when it's not used to just —

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms McDonald, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1020

### EDMUND FOWLER

**The Chair:** Would Edmund Fowler please come forward. Good morning, Mr Fowler. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Edmund Fowler:** Thank you, Mr Chairman and ladies and gentlemen, for listening to me.

I just want to start off with a couple of quotations which some of you have heard perhaps all too much recently, but I want to repeat them. I think they bear repeating.

"The Garden of Eden: East York is indeed the Garden of Eden, a community with a special identity, a unique pride, a strong will for independence and a capacity to care for its own. The survival of this municipality has been questioned for years, perhaps decades, but survive it has and survive it will." These are the words of David Johnson, as I'm sure you know.

"There is no cost for a municipality to maintain its name and identity. Why destroy our roots and our pride? I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger municipalities." Mike Harris said this in the fall of 1994 to an audience in Fergus.

I have taught local government for 25 years at Glendon College of York University and I too believe that bigger is not better. I am here because I feel Mr Johnson and Mr Harris have made an about-face. They are proposing a terrible piece of legislation, completely antithetical to their position a few years ago. I want to figure out why.

To make sense of why Bill 103 is being proposed, we must start by remembering that everything fits together. Trust me, it really does. We love to separate things into categories, we humans, but in so doing we become so dazzled by our clever distinctions that we forget how they all fit together.

I want to start by way of example, by looking at what places are. Think for a minute about where each of us lives. It's really quite remarkable. Into one house or a building come water, hydro, telephone lines and highly trained men and women who are ready to help us in emergencies. Individual units are all linked to some vast waste disposal system and our garbage and sewage are whisked away. All these services and functions criss-cross and interconnect to serve one building, one block, one neighbourhood.

That's because buildings and neighbourhoods are like people: They are glorious, interdependent, multilayered bundles of energy capable of doing all sorts of different things. People don't just eat, sleep and sit on the toilet. We cook meals, we sing, we write computer programs, we have children, we tell stories, we make love and make change.

Places are like that. Ecologists have told us there is a remarkable interconnection in, say, just a tiny area of woodland; it just interlinks the activities of millions of different organisms: trees and their roots, squirrels, mushrooms and microscopic bacteria. In a similar manner, urban places combine human social activities with political economic and cultural pursuits all at once, all at the same time.

Places are really what local governments are all about. The basic functions that I described above — police services and sewage, fire protection and so forth — are services to places. We wouldn't be holding this meeting here if municipalities weren't providing us efficiently with lights and hydro, heat and all sorts of other services, including the roads and the TTC that got us here. But to separate those services from what we're actually doing here — the meeting we're holding, the purposes of this meeting — would be foolish. We have to link them together, and that's why local governments also have another very important function, which is to plan land use, to figure out sensible ways in which people and places and services fit together. That's what I mean by fitting together.

This coordination requires a really intimate knowledge of how local places and people fit together. This is a knowledge that provincial and federal governments are incapable of having. In fact, many large cities are incapable of having this kind of knowledge. After all, if you think of Metropolitan Toronto or the greater Toronto area from a bird's-eye view, if you try to look at them as a whole, the way people and places fit together really seems incomprehensible. These intricacies are not mysterious to those of us who know the places. Services and people at this level are not entangled, as we've been told, but integrated in the manner I've just described. It would be foolish to say there's no waste, but to say that duplication exists because, say, East York has one fire department and the city of Toronto has another defies logic. The two departments simply serve two distinct places.

I think it's really important to remember that large-scale regional and provincial governments with their bird's-eye view have a lot to do with why we're here today talking about problems in municipal government. With their policies of taxation, subsidies and so forth, they have encouraged an urban development which is causing all our problems with local government boundaries and with the costs of municipal services. Maybe most of you are familiar with the massive costs of urban sprawl. This form of development didn't just happen; it was fuelled by everything from tax and fiscal policies of the federal government to provincial subsidies of roads and trunk sewers.

Such practices made a mockery of municipal boundaries. That's why we have problems with the GTA. It caused us to spend billions and billions — and I'm not mixing my consonants there — of extra dollars on infrastructure, and caused grievous damage to our personal health and to the environment. Economic decline inevitably followed, and my own research has shown that large-scale, homogeneous development attributable to these policies of large-scale governments is associated with a loss of community, juvenile delinquency and rising

rates of crime, which I understand Mr Gilchrist is concerned with in his own riding.

All this happened because large units of governments haven't the time or ability or intelligence to plan a variety of small-scale, diverse neighbourhoods that are necessary to a vibrant city. This planning has to be done from below, and our economic and social health depends on our grasp of this fact. Even bankers are telling us that successful cities are defined by the creation of new products and dense networks of caring from within, not by competing for outside capital to come in. That's not how cities work. Cities work by replacing imports, by nurturing our close-grained structure of land use and old and new buildings, not by smokestack chasing.

Years ago urban economists in the United States, Canada and the UK discovered that all this actually fits together in the sense that municipal services and zoning necessary to support a sensible physical environment are best coordinated at a population of about 100,000 to 200,000 people. The horizontal communication that's needed among public works, utilities, parks and police commissioners is practicable at this level so that Hydro workers don't dig up streets that road crews have just paved.

Bigger units produce urban sprawl with their zoning, and big, vertically integrated bureaucracies eat up tax dollars because they are hidden from public view and not friendly to integrating their functions horizontally. This was determined years ago.

The optimum unit size for cheap and efficient services, political and social vitality and population health is between 100,000 and 200,000 people, and I give lots of references in my paper. Political participation goes up at this level; services are cheaper. This was found out in the 1970s.

**The Chair:** Mr Fowler, I am sorry to interrupt, but you're coming right to the end of your 10 minutes and you don't have time to read through the remainder. I wonder if you could sum up.

**Mr Fowler:** I would like to sum up simply by saying, if this is such a bad idea, why is the government doing it? This government's leaders in the recent past have forcefully expressed opposition to amalgamation. It's okay to change your mind, but if you do, a proposal like this should be introduced with humility and time to discuss it. You never know when you might change your mind again.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Fowler, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1030

#### BILL FREEMAN

**The Chair:** Would Bill Freeman please come forward. Good morning, Mr Freeman. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Bill Freeman:** Thank you for allowing me to come and make a presentation before your committee. I am somewhat familiar with Queen's Park. I was policy adviser for the previous Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ed Philip, and I want to let the committee know that I come with some expertise and some understanding of some of the problems that are being wrestled with here. Frankly, they are serious problems that do need to be addressed.

First of all, we should all frame our understanding of this to understand that the city of Toronto — and I use the word "Toronto" to generally mean Metro or the Metro area — is a very special place. I think some of the anger and discomfort, call it what you may, that you find people are coming forward and expressing here is because they think they have built a pretty special place here in the city of Toronto.

It's a place where neighbourhoods work, and I think it's important to remember this: It's a place that in a way has been rejuvenated from the central core out. There are new and vibrant communities built on old communities here — Cabbagetown, Riverdale, the Beaches. There are new neighbourhoods along the waterfront. Parkdale and Bloor West Village and lots of other places in this area are becoming rejuvenated.

If there is one underlying theme that seems to be going through the protest and concern that we've seen about this bill in the last few days, it is the fear that Bill 103 is going to destroy this, and I'm afraid I have come to the conclusion that it is a very real threat to what we've known here in this city.

The problem in American cities has been rising crime, infestation of drugs, unbearable welfare costs, high taxes, shoddy services, poor schools, racism. What has happened in city after city in the United States is that the middle class has, if you will, fled the centre of the city and the centres of the cities have become places of poor people. This has not happened in Toronto, and I think it's very important to remember that Toronto has a very strong residential character to it. There are many people of upper income, middle income and in fact lower income living here and getting along quite well. When people from around the world come to Toronto and say that this is a good place and they rank Toronto as having a very high quality of life, this is what they're talking about. Frankly, if you tinker with these issues, you do it at your peril. I think this is what we're seeing.

When I was involved with government here at Queen's Park we wrestled with the issue of governance and the issue of taxation. These twin issues have plagued continuing governments for a long time, and frankly they're going to continue to plague us for a long time. But I think it's important to talk about them.

When I was involved, two key issues were debated very strongly. One was market value assessment here in Metro and the other was this disparity in commercial and business taxes between the Metro area and the 905 region, as it's come to be called. Typically, business and realty taxes are 45% to even 80% higher here in Metro than the area outside it. Frankly, that's a problem we tried to address, not with much success, but clearly one of the reasons the Golden commission was appointed was in order to address these problems. I think we all have a concern about that and everybody on all sides of the House when I was here at Queen's Park was concerned about this in a very genuine way.

The difficulty is that the proposals being brought forward by the government simply do not deal with these key questions. What is going to happen as a result of the proposals, if I read them right, is that with welfare being put on to the property tax, it's going to exacerbate this

whole problem, and quite enormously exacerbate the problem particularly for people of middle and upper income in the city of Toronto and in the core. There is real panic out there and I think that panic is quite justified.

What we're going to see if these proposals go through is some of the dreadful things that have happened in American cities where the middle class flees the downtown core. As we all know from our economics classes, nothing shapes individual behaviour more than economics, and issues like taxes are very important. One of the reasons why Toronto and Metro generally have remained a favourable place for people to live is that taxes have been reasonable. If you're going to load higher levels of taxes on to these people, they're frankly going to flee. There's a whole syndrome here, because as people leave, the ability to tax goes down and you've got to raise taxes; raising taxes forces more people to go, and on and on you go. I don't need to remind you people of all this.

So taxes are at the core of this, and I am afraid that rather than solving those problems that were set out by such groups as the Fair Tax Commission, which was set aside by the last government to try and wrestle with these problems, the Golden commission that was set aside, in fact this government has gone in a direction that is going to increase the problem rather than lessen the problem. If there's one key issue that I leave with you, it is this problem: You ain't solving the problem.

Secondly, I want to talk about the political issues here, because I was involved in a very intimate way with the whole issue of dealing with the GTA mayors. I attended many of the GTA mayors' meetings, became a close friend of Hazel McCallion, among others. What I found in my whole experience, the directions that my minister wanted me to address, was to try and bring people together to see if we could begin to achieve some form of consensus. It would certainly be wrong to say that with that disparate group consensus was emerging, but I think, through the GTA mayors committee that Hazel McCallion worked at and established, there was a lot of coming together on this.

We assisted that group through economic development. Why? Because we thought this was a thing that spoke to all of the mayors and would help them begin to work together. The whole approach that we were attempting to do was to build consensus and build coalitions to make people come together. People in that committee were beginning to understand that this is one urban environment here, one contiguous region that stretches from east of Oshawa through to Burlington, and north from the lake certainly up to Newmarket and beyond, to Caledon. It is a totally builtup area.

We know that we need to be able to deal with these issues on this GTA-wide basis. Why? Because we need to be able to coordinate, in particular, issues such as transportation, planning, roads, sewers, water, all of those types of infrastructure issues that are the fundamental responsibility of government. How we deliver those things is very key and important.

Our attempt was to try and build towards some type of consensus where we could attempt to build some type of

political unit that would make sense. The other part of our thinking was clearly a criticism of Metro and of the way Metro had developed.

I'll give my own personal opinion on this. When the Liberals made direct elections to Metro, I for one supported this. I thought this was a good idea. I think history has proven that it was a bad idea. What happened is that there are now at Metro competing political bodies between Metro and the lower tiers. That's perceived by the public as just a bunch of squabbling, and no doubt a lot of it is, frankly, turf wars. Politicians know all about that. My own sense is that the direct election was a mistake and that indirect appointment is much better. It does not create that type of conflict at a municipal level.

Those were two problems that we attempted to address and the Golden report was a result of that. In reading the Golden report, I certainly support the general thrust that was going in, because it did two things: It strengthened local governments and, secondly, it provided a type of political body that would be GTA-wide that could deal with the infrastructure problems and those types of decisions.

I think the direction of Bill 103 is exactly not the direction to go. I think it will be a very serious problem and a serious mistake. It doesn't take in the whole urban envelope; that's number one. Number two, what it does —

**The Chair:** Mr Freeman, I'm sorry. We're already at 11 minutes, and I know that you, having been a veteran of the place, understand the rules.

**Mr Freeman:** I do. I know the way it works.

**The Chair:** I want to thank you very much for coming forward today and making your presentation.

1040

#### BRADLEY FOSTER

**The Chair:** Would Bradley Foster please come forward. Good morning, Mr Foster, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Bradley Foster:** Good morning and thank you for inviting me here to speak.

I am a resident of Toronto, an entrepreneur, an employer, a father of three and an active community member. I am currently chair of the Palmerston Area Residents' Association traffic committee, which represents 2,000 households in our area. I wish to address the committee about why I think Bill 103 threatens our way of life and will make Toronto a lesser rather than a greater city.

I volunteer a great deal of my time to make my neighbourhood and community a better place to live. I do this for a number of reasons: I like to help people, I want to make my community the best it can be, I can use my leadership skills in a positive way and because I can be effective. There are thousands of people doing the same sort of thing across the GTA and in other communities in Ontario. Our time and leadership contribute to making communities more livable, safer and more desirable places to live and work. But we are often taken for granted because we have no official role in local government, and our coalitions rise and disappear with the issues. Taking us for granted is a major flaw in Bill 103,

its neighbourhood committees and its community councils. There is nothing in the megacity legislation that makes government user-friendly for people like me.

Let me give you a few examples of the kind of community work I do. The small park across the street from our house rose from the site of an old rooming-house that burned to the ground about 20 years ago. The park had a few swings and a slide. When I moved into the area the park was not being used by the new families flocking into the neighbourhood. The park was neglected, often littered with papers, broken glass, and home to gangs of youth who spent evenings drinking beer and keeping the neighbours awake.

The city did a good job of maintaining the park, but the function of the park no longer suited the neighbourhood. They picked up litter from time to time, mowed the grass — I can't say I ever recall seeing another city or borough mowing our lawn — and maintained the playground equipment. Neighbours even called the police to get the youths to move on, usually to other parks. I asked my kids why they didn't play in the park. They told me it was boring, there was nothing to do. This was partly because there were no other children there, so I said, "Let's change that."

We started a petition to lobby the city parks department to install new playground equipment. In a few weeks we had the support of over 100 families. I contacted our city councillor, who put me in touch with a playground designer in the parks department. She was very supportive and worked with a committee of neighbours struck to help redevelop the park. It just so happened that the parks department had the money for a climber they were going to install in another park but the residents there didn't want it.

Since the new equipment came in, the park is full of children every day. It has become a focal point for our community where parents meet and exchange information. Vandalism has almost disappeared. Garbage and broken glass are a rare sight. Best of all, everyone involved in the process felt empowered because they took ownership of their problems. That's how great cities work.

A sense of ownership is what makes city dwellers feel in control of problems. No city gives people a sense of ownership, but cities can facilitate it by having open doors and by being responsive to citizens' needs. People also need to feel they can be effective. Not very long ago Toronto city hall was closed to public input and it was a less great city. It has gradually opened up not only the process but the bureaucracy to help citizens solve their own problems.

In case you're not aware, we have had an experience with a megacity for the past nine years or so. I'm talking about the Metro level of government. In the last election, the city of Toronto held a plebiscite in which a majority of voters chose to eliminate the Metro level of government. Several Metro councillors in the last election were acclaimed because nobody bothered to run against them. In fact, during the last provincial election Mr Harris said he was in favour of eliminating the Metro level of government. His announcement was greeted with enthusiasm in Toronto.

Instead, this government proposes to remove the popular level of local government, leaving us with a loathsome council. What are we to draw from this exercise? That we can't have the local councils we've worked to shape? Is this government trying to tell us we should hate government because we can't have one we like?

In my experience, dealing with Metro has been very frustrating and discouraging. I see no evidence that the megacity will be any different. One case in point is when our traffic committee wanted to change the direction of one street for 50 years from a signalled intersection, which means that Metro has to get involved. Everyone was in favour of this idea: residents, the store owner, the truck drivers who use the street and even the city councillors. We hit a wall of resistance at Metro. Transportation department mandarins spent a great deal of time defending their assumption that there would be chaos and death if this went ahead. Eventually we convinced enough councillors to try it and it went ahead. The intersection is now much safer than it was before.

A case could have been made to keep the six cities and expand the Metro level to cover most of the GTA as a coordinating body. This could have been done in a relatively painless way and harmony would have prevailed. Instead, this government is charging ahead like a bull in a china shop, smashing up everything that works. What we get is a reconstituted Metro with all of the city services and a lot of unwanted provincial liabilities.

The discussion around Bill 103 and the way this government is attempting to ram it through despite our wishes speaks volumes about the cynical way this government views citizen participation and debate in the formation of policy. The Minister of Municipal Affairs has been cited for contempt of the Legislature and he is repeatedly contemptuous of public input unless it supports the government. Mr Leach has done everything he can to make citizens of this city feel disfranchised and helpless. Several people have told me there is no point voting in the referendum because the government will ignore the results, so why should they bother? Are we supposed to trust this man to bring forth a system that is as fair as the local government we have now? Yesterday a court stripped him of his unelected trustees, which gives me a little more faith in the system.

Perhaps this government is just being naïve and they really don't know how to create legislation. They should look to the city of Toronto for examples of how to do it right. Before the city makes policy, they actually hold public hearings with all the stakeholders to get input and public participation to find out what they think. In my experience, people closest to the problems always have the solutions.

But the amalgamation bill is not about finding out what people want. It's not about saving money and it's not about streamlining government. It's not even really about reducing the duplication of services. Amalgamation is a bad solution in search of a problem.

Bill 103 is about all the other bills that come after it that download, dismantle and disentangle — or is that "mangle"? Bill 103 has become a necessary evil for this government and that's why Mr Leach has been so

emphatic and really quite clear that nothing will stop this bill. The government would fall on its collective face if Bill 103 fails to gain approval in the Legislature or fails to gain royal assent. That will not happen, because this government needs Bill 103 passed at all costs.

Does this make this committee hearing a farce? I don't think so. This committee has been a very useful process for educating the public about the nature and intentions of this legislation. Even those who would control the media can't halt the flow of information spilling out of this room. The hearings have even pulled a small group of the bill's supporters out into the light of day for all to see and hear.

Downloading and education reform are what amalgamation is all about and the government should have the guts to be upfront about it. The public mauling that members of this government get whenever they show their faces in public should convince them they've not fooled many of us, and we'll be even less amused if and when this government tries to ram this legislation through.

#### 1050

Bill 103 is profoundly flawed. Amendments can't fix it. Megacity doesn't have legs. As an idea, it has not travelled beyond a small circle of politicians, journalists and lobbyists with vested interests in busting up the six cities. As an idea, it is stillborn. As a concept, it is a lightning-rod for anger about downloading. The government is like a runaway train on the wrong track, but like most runaway trains they eventually run out of steam or they can derail at a turn.

Thank you for letting me get this off my chest. I would also like to thank the government for bringing everyone in the six cities together on this issue. It's very inspiring to be involved in the fight against Bill 103, a fight which will only intensify if it is passed into law.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Foster. You have effectively used up your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward.

#### JOE FLEXER

**The Chair:** Would Joe Flexer please come forward. Good morning, Mr Flexer, welcome to the committee.

**Mr Joe Flexer:** Good morning. My name is Joe Flexer. I've lived in Toronto since 1971. I moved here after living in many cities in Canada and around the world. Despite many serious problems characteristic of contemporary society, I found Toronto to be a congenial and good place to live. The city and its surrounding municipalities are clean, well serviced and relatively safe. Until recently, most working people were able to make a decent living for themselves and their families. The multicultural character of the Toronto area is a joy, making Toronto an exciting and interesting place to live.

All of that began to change in June 1995, with the election of the neo-conservative government of Mike Harris. Mike Harris's Common Sense Revolution is part of the political drive by corporate Canada to force down the standard of living and democratic and union rights of Canada's working people. The mechanisms of this agenda are too many to detail here but I contend that virtually

every move proposed and made by this government since its election in June 1995 is calculated to further this overall objective. These measures are what corporate Canada, the people who the Harris government represents and work for, thinks is necessary to augment their already bloated profits in the economic climate that prevails in the world today.

The implementation of this agenda has sparked in Ontario a popular fight-back movement which is larger, broader, politically more astute and more militant than is the case so far in any North American jurisdiction.

Municipal governments are institutions that are most directly responsive to popular influence and control. In the context of the fight-back movement that has emerged in Ontario, they have become centres of legitimate democratic opposition to the Harris government's agenda. The opposition to the gutting of rent controls and the opposition to the privatization of public services are but two among the many examples of this that I could cite.

Special mention should be made of the endorsement by the majority of the municipal council of Toronto of the October 25 and 26 Days of Action, including the Friday general strike. I hear by the grapevine that it was this endorsement that sparked the government's final decision to bull ahead with the megacity legislation. Bill 103 is the Harris government's way to rid itself of this impediment. It is a key part in establishing the political control needed by the government to implement its anti-people agenda. Mike Harris has been overheard saying, "We have to get rid of these lefties."

Bill 103 is primarily political in its objectives but it also aims at furthering economic objectives. Bill 103's political objective is to eliminate what I call legitimate centres of democratic opposition, resistance and education, and replace them with a remote and more easily controlled system of local governance. Its method is the bloodless coup d'état and blitzkrieg.

Bill 103 puts existing municipal governments under the trusteeship of a group of appointed bureaucrats accountable only to the Tory cabinet. Under the bill, this trusteeship has the power to veto all financial, budgetary, planning, hiring and promotional decisions of the democratically elected municipal councils. These bureaucrats will be answerable only to the provincial government and will be enjoined from speaking to the media. Their actions will not be subject to any judicial review or oversight. I certainly welcome yesterday's court decision that, for the moment at least, overrides these obviously anti-democratic measures. This notwithstanding, these anti-democratic provisions remain part of the bill.

Bill 103 then puts into place a new structure of municipal government to govern over 2.2 million people. This is a hefty percentage of the population of Ontario. A major anti-democratic aspect of this new structure is that to elect a majority to the municipal council of this megacity government can, and probably will, cost many millions of dollars. The people behind the Harris government have this kind of money; working people and their organizations in Metro do not. The authors of Bill 103 think this new governmental structure will likely do their bidding and help in an important way to advance their agenda.

To sum up, Bill 103 is anti-democratic and is clearly aimed at gravely weakening the democratic character of municipal governance in Ontario. It therefore should and must be vigorously opposed by all those who believe in the expansion of democracy and not in its weakening or practical elimination. The working people of Ontario have a particular interest in defeating this anti-democratic bill. They and many of their organizations are therefore participating in the popular struggle to force the government to scrap it. This movement will surely grow. I demand that the Harris government scrap Bill 103.

The economic objectives flowing from Bill 103 are three in number. First is to offload the costs of degraded social services on to the backs of working people and small and medium business people through increased property taxes and user fees. Second is to pave the way for the rapid privatization of large segments of government-funded public services, thereby destroying many thousands of good, unionized jobs, and through the withdrawal of successor rights replacing them with low-wage, unorganized and contingent labour. Third is to position the provincial government to plunder the education system's budget of the \$1.2 billion it needs to finance Mike Harris's payoff to the already rich through his phoney tax cut.

In order to mask and hide its political and economic objectives, the government's principal argument has been that amalgamation and revision of the municipal tax structure will lead to greater efficiency and save lots of money. This outlandish claim is made despite the fact that every piece of serious research in the world has shown that in megacities the public services that are delivered are not only of significantly lesser quality, but actually cost more per citizen than they do in smaller municipalities. No reputable studies I have seen have shown that the government's case is credible.

Overall, the justifications and pretexts used by the government to cover their tracks on Bill 103 remind me of the labour leader who once said that if she goes to heaven, it won't be for the good things she has done, but rather in recompense for the bullshit she has had to listen to.

Finally, a word about the future as I think it will unfold: The referendum organized by the popular movement in conjunction with the municipal governments will show a good, if not massive, majority for the "No to the megacity" side. The government has already stated that it will disregard this outcome and go against this expression of the popular will. I believe this will be the case. The government will try to justify this by attacking the credibility of the referendum. This is already happening on a day-to-day basis in much of Toronto's mass media which, for reasons of furthering their own special interests, are supporting the megacity madness. This will not work. The people of Ontario will see through this elaborate con.

The key question is, what will the response of the mass movement be to this? I must commend the Citizens for Local Democracy, led by John Sewell, for raising the spectre of the 1837 rebellion led by William Lyon Mackenzie. The spirit, in modern form, of the democratic struggle that culminated in the Mackenzie-Papineau

rebellion of 1837, together with the class struggle, is on the rise in Ontario and I think the Harris government will be very hard-pressed to prevail against it.

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This committee can take my word for it. There are thousands of activists and many tens of thousands of good and sensible working people in Ontario who will rise to this challenge. I therefore urge and demand that the Harris government have the good sense to do two things: First, it must scrap Bill 103; second, since it has shown itself to be a government destructive to the wellbeing of many tens of thousands of Ontario's working people, it must resign and allow for a new expression of popular will through a provincial election.

Thank you for your attention and I'll be pleased to answer any questions.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Unfortunately, you have exhausted all of your allotted time, Mr Flexer.

**Mr Flexer:** I sort of figured it would be that way.

**The Chair:** I want to thank you for coming forward.

**Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold):** Chair, on a point of order: I'd be pleased to agree to giving Mr Gilchrist five minutes to engage in dialogue with this presenter.

**The Chair:** I'm sure you would, but everyone's just as important as the next person, Mr Kormos.

#### MARC MEYER

**The Chair:** Would Marc Meyer please come forward. Good morning, Mr Meyer, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Marc Meyer:** Good morning. First, I'd like to thank the committee for allowing me to make this deputation regarding Bill 103 this morning.

I'd like to give you my background at this moment. I grew up in Hamilton-Wentworth and graduated from landscape architecture at the University of Guelph. I studied planning, urban sociology, design and plant culture. In 1990 I moved to Toronto to work for a private landscape architecture office. Since that time, I have been a landscape inspector for the town of Markham and a technician for Metro Parks in Toronto, where I redesigned parks. I now work in the brokerage industry, in First Canadian Place.

What I'd like to present to the committee today are my views on the discussion concerning Bill 103, based on my academic experience, my life as a Torontonian, but more importantly, my role in Toronto area municipal government.

The evidence for the need for change is really quite clear. Governments must be held accountable for their fiscal spending. We cannot continue to accrue debt. There is no question in my mind that a fiscally responsible government is the way of the next millennium. This committee has heard many deputations explaining how the present system of property tax assessment varies across Toronto and should be reshaped. You have also heard how bylaws vary from municipality to municipality and are often confused with Metro bylaws.

Clearly these issues and many others point to the need for change, which is why many people are in favour of

Bill 103. Yet I have seen very little in respect of a plan as to how the Harris government expects to maintain the quality of life for Metro Toronto's visitors, employees and residents. I don't believe many of the supporters of Bill 103 understand that there is a large risk involved with this change.

The evidence that the Harris government uses to support Bill 103 for a cost-efficient Toronto, as we all know, is the KPMG report, which was written in only 10 days. This is hardly enough time to thoroughly analyse the data. As this committee has heard many times, there has yet to be an amalgamation of this nature that has not increased the costs for a city. Regardless of whether you may think duplication of services may be eliminated or that wage discrepancies will be averaged down rather than up or whether systems such as computerized firefighter dispatchers can be engineered at a reasonable cost, there is insufficient analysis to prove that cost savings will result.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has been very particular in pointing out the so-called benefits of Bill 103, but he has not informed the public about the non-fiscal issues concerning Bill 103. It is these non-fiscal aspects of Bill 103 that I wish to focus upon next, based on my experience at Metro.

I would like to examine the difference in management style, comparing Metro to each of the municipalities, using Metro Parks as the model. Currently, Metro Parks is responsible for maintaining large recreation facilities. These facilities include soccer fields, such as at Eglinton Flats; public golf courses; extensive trail systems, such as along the Humber and Don Rivers; and vast parks.

Metro parks are much more homogeneous than municipal parks. It has been my experience that Metro Parks maintains its open areas better than its specialty landscapes. Parks such as James Gardens and Edwards Gardens are unique among Metro's collection because they combine plantings with retaining walls, walkways and wood structures. Metro Parks does not repair small problems in specialty areas such as these. Rather, it allows walkways, retaining walls etc to slowly decay to the point where the only option is to renovate whole areas on a large scale. By contrast, similar parks in the city of Toronto appear better maintained. The city of Toronto is more familiar with managing diverse materials and so is better able to repair these items when needed.

If the two tiers of parks are amalgamated, the Metro style of management will dominate over municipal. This is because the sheer size of the region will require a large-scale manager to coordinate the affairs, while the smaller municipal style takes a back seat. If the Metro style of management is applied to municipal parks, they will succumb to large-scale renovation practices.

Also, as a regional manager Metro distributes moneys for items like flowers equally throughout the region. The city of Toronto is more diverse. It tends to focus resources in key areas. A regional style of management applied to city of Toronto parks will result in areas such as St James Park and the Artists' Gardens having their resources averaged out over the region.

Last week, Janet May presented to this committee an example of how she and her friends were able to instigate

changes to her local parks department with regard to decreased use of lawn chemicals. She explained that after approaching her local government: "Within a month, pesticide use was on the agenda of North York city council. Within a year, a multistakeholder committee had developed a pesticide reduction strategy for the city." She explained how similar groups have not achieved similar results in Metro parks. Her story illustrates the difference in the two management styles. Metro effects change more slowly because it maintains large areas and has a more bureaucratic management style. North York, by contrast, deals with smaller areas, is more flexible and responds more quickly.

Amalgamation of two mutually exclusive styles of parks management does not create a hybrid that automatically takes on the best qualities of both. I have used regional and local parks departments to illustrate my point, but the Metro versus local municipal examples can be seen in all areas of amalgamation. The minister, Mr Leach, has not addressed the issues of these two management styles. Without detailing how to marry the conflicting management styles, amalgamation cannot be effective.

I won't elaborate much on the effects that downloading welfare costs will have on Metropolitan Toronto, since you've heard much on that topic already. I will make the point that this added cost is another problem brought in at a time of restructuring and is hindered by the lack of a plan to resolve the difference in management styles. It will be beyond the ability of the new municipal body to meet targets within the time frame that the Ontario government has outlined. I would also like to mention that it has recently come to my attention that Bill 107, the waste management improvement act, also involves downloading costs to the cities. Although I have not had time to examine the bill, I wonder if the government has assessed how Bill 107 will impact the overpressed amalgamation process.

The Harris government's priority became quite clear to me at a recent public meeting at St Paul's Church which I attended. The minister, Mr Leach, was explaining how the proportion of municipal moneys spent by Metro compared to the local level. He joked that the services Metro provided were "the important stuff." Mr Leach smiled and paused, I assume so his supporters could laugh and applaud his statement. Unfortunately, Mr Leach's supporters were few and far between that night. No one smiled.

These are just some of the services Mr Leach insinuated aren't important: bike lanes, small parks, small recreation areas, rape counselling centres, family planning clinics, women's shelters, needle exchange program, public health clinics, art in public places strategy, local environmental groups like Save the Don, libraries, Toronto Arts Council, adult education classes, English-as-a-second-language courses and training for immigrant families.

All these services are used by most Torontonians at one point or another. I don't believe Mr Leach really cares whether or not the majority of these services provided locally should survive the uploading to a regional scale. At the same meeting at which Mr Leach spoke, a newsletter was distributed by the Ontario PC

Party. Inside was an article called "7 Benefits to You — Why a Unified Toronto is Good News to Taxpayers." Nowhere was mentioned a commitment to ensure the same level of local services is maintained after amalgamation. Why not? Since the province has appointed trustees to oversee municipal spending and a transition team to oversee the restructuring, why can't it make a commitment to taxpayers?

**1110**

The minimum level of services that the taxpayers will receive in an amalgamated city should be the same as they currently receive. The government cannot judge one service to be more important than any other service. It was not elected for this purpose. It is severely tightening the purse-strings under the pretence of increasing efficiency by amalgamation. Mistakes made now will resound into the next millennium and will possibly never be undone.

I will be voting no on the question of amalgamation in the referendum. I will do so not because I am satisfied with the status quo, as Mr Leach calls a nay vote. Municipal problems can be resolved by moving services to the appropriate level, either regionally or locally, wherever they serve taxpayers best. This can only be determined through the cooperation of politicians, civil servants and citizens working together in the best interests of all. Until such a plan is proposed, I cannot endorse unilateral change.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Meyer. You have used the allotted time. We appreciate your coming today.

#### RENA GINSBERG

**The Vice-Chair:** I call on Rena Ginsberg. Good morning, Ms Ginsberg. Welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Rena Ginsberg:** I'd like to say first of all that I'm very pleased to be able to speak at this public hearing to express my views on Bill 103. I currently live in the east end of the city of Toronto and before moving there lived for many years in Toronto's west end. I've never delivered this sort of presentation before, but feel I must speak out on this issue.

The prospect of the profound changes being proposed in Bill 103 has caused me to reflect on what I value in our city. It has made me realize that there's a lot about living in Toronto that's very important to me, things I've come to take for granted for many years now.

I've lived in Toronto since September 1972, when I moved here from the New York City area, supposedly for one academic year. I'd been to Toronto only once before, for a day and a half a few years earlier, and had so enjoyed it I decided to come back for a longer stay. I had been impressed with the city's friendly inhabitants, numerous parks, clean, safe streets and efficient public transit.

When I started to live here, I began to notice more profound differences between Toronto and New York, differences that I discovered underlay the things that had first impressed me. The most striking difference for me was the vitality of the downtown area, where people of

all walks of life and income levels lived. I was used to Manhattan, where a large percentage of the inhabitants were either people who had the means to live in upscale neighbourhoods or those who couldn't afford to escape tenements and public housing projects.

While I saw some evidence of that in Toronto, I saw many more people who fell between these economic extremes, people engaged in a wide variety of vocations and pursuits, including raising families. They not only worked and shopped in some of the busiest parts of the city, but lived there too. Living downtown, I discovered, was an affordable option, one that many chose. The result was a city with a variety of downtown neighbourhoods, each with a unique sense of community.

The fact that people identified with and cared about their neighbourhoods created community activism, in terms of mutual help and volunteering and in terms of political action. Apathy was nowhere apparent. A burgeoning citizens movement strove to uphold the rights of those wanting a say in the future of their communities versus those who saw development solely in terms of dollars and cents. That the little guy could sometimes win against big interests was most encouraging. There was a sense of being part of a caring and supportive society.

Now, after weathering rough economic times, including the downsizing and cutbacks of recent years, community life as we know it in Toronto is facing a direct attack in Bill 103, as well as in the proposed downloading of social services. If these plans go ahead unchanged, neighbourhoods in Toronto will suffer, along with many of their residents. The quality of life will never be the same and the health of the entire city will be compromised.

We are told this will not happen. The government's public relations flyer promises, "Toronto will always be a city of neighbourhoods." That may be true if we're simply talking about areas where people happen to live, but for residents to have a sense of belonging and ownership in those neighbourhoods, they must feel that the structures and institutions function according to their needs and interests.

It is not by accident that Toronto's neighbourhoods are vital and distinctive. They are nourished by excellent services, affordable housing of different kinds and a system of local democracy that allows citizens a strong voice. With government being close to its constituents, we are better able to affect issues in our communities, whether they be the pollution caused by a local industry, a drug problem in the community or traffic concerns. I do not see how individual neighbourhoods can receive the same attention and commitment in the proposed megacity, with less than half the number of councillors and each ward correspondingly larger. The proposed neighbourhood committees will clearly have little or no power to bring action on local concerns.

I also believe that under one government it is doubtful the cities currently within Metro will receive the services and programs best suited to them. The characters of these cities and their subsequent needs are simply too different. The city of Toronto, for instance, provides grants to budding artists, choreographers, composers and writers because it knows that the arts community must be nurtured in order for our cultural industry to thrive. No

other city in Metro funds the arts to anywhere near the extent that Toronto does, and the level has not dropped since 1993. I doubt very much that such funding will have the same commitment on a megacity council, particularly in these times of tight budgets. This is a very worrisome prospect to those of us who, like me, enjoy and appreciate the arts scene in our city and realize its importance for both tourism and Canada's cultural development.

The government says that the proposed megacity will be more efficient and save money. But the supporting evidence is far from conclusive, and information to the contrary abounds. As political scientist Michael Keating noted in a recent *Globe and Mail* article, "Nobody has seriously argued that economies of scale continue past a population of about half a million." So it mystifies me why an amalgamation bringing 2.3 million people in five cities and one borough under the governance of one council is being, in effect, foisted on us.

I do think there is a need for better coordination within the GTA and that certain aspects of municipal government are best organized at the regional level, such as transportation planning, environmental protection and business development. If Bill 103 were proposing some sort of umbrella regional body for the GTA, I would consider it a step forward. As it stands, we are being presented with a bill that offers no regional vision, while depriving us of systems on the local level that function to represent us.

I find it very disturbing that this government deems haste to be of such importance that it has not been willing to take seriously the views of constituents. There is no democracy without consent. A song comes to mind that says, "Take your time and do it right." Why the rush to have such a massive change signed and sealed for this year's municipal election? Better to take a little longer and consider such change carefully, in consultation with urban experts and citizens. The result will be a quality proposal that will stand the test of time and that people will be able to respect.

It is crucial that elected officials of all stripes speak out for the proper handling of reform in Toronto and area, so that while efficiencies are improved, the ability of our communities to be represented democratically is maintained. This is not frivolous. This means the difference between a city where people get together to solve problems and improve the quality of life and a city where neglect and apathy reign.

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York):** Thank you, Ms Ginsberg, for your presentation. I have to say that I have been very inspired by many of the presentations, the individual testimonies and the expertise they bring. Under normal circumstances, most governments would be very impressed and learn much from them, but we have a different situation that we're dealing with.

Mr Foster made a good point, and I think you've made it as well. He said that a sense of ownership is what makes the city dwellers feel in control of problems; that no city gives people a sense of ownership, but cities can facilitate it by having open doors and by being responsive to citizens' needs.

I think you said that, and Mike Harris agreed with that in 1994 when he said: "I disagree with restructuring, because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger communities." He knew that then, he knows it now, but something has changed.

Why do you think they would do something that seems to be so contrary to public opinion, public expertise in the field, the desire to keep local governments and the failure to deal with the regional questions that Metro and the GTA should have dealt with together? Why do you think they would do this?

1120

**Ms Ginsberg:** It's a mystery. I really can't say. I've asked myself the same question. I don't know.

**Mr Marchese:** It is a mystery to us as well, but not so much a mystery, because I think it's all very much driven by big business interests. We know the developers love this. The Urban Development Institute came and said, "We love it," more or less; I'm paraphrasing, but they liked it. Why? Because it's so much easier for them to deal with one government. They can influence it better, of course. Through Bill 86, they can get more money now. They no longer have that ceiling of \$7,500 that this bill changes, permitting developers and other wealthy partners of theirs to give more money. It's all to facilitate their work. This is a government that is an instrument of that particular objective. That's my opinion, obviously.

By the way, I wanted to share something with you. Professor Beth Moore Milroy, a professor of urban and regional planning, said something very compelling. She said this: "And go to studies that teach about the local, human scale." She's worried about the human scale — "That is the scale at which people can understand their surroundings and at which they believe they can have an effect on their milieux. Understanding and believing in one's efficacy brings out energy, caring, innovation, dedication. Take away the capacity to grasp the scale and to have a say in what is going on and people stop paying attention, the city debilitates.

"The right scale feeds efficacy; efficacy feeds caring; caring feeds the city; and around we go." Do you have an opinion on that?

**Ms Ginsberg:** No.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Ginsberg, for appearing here today. We have run out of time.

SAVINO QUATELA  
MARIA RIZZO

**The Vice-Chair:** I call our next speakers, Savino Quatela and Maria Rizzo, to come forward, please. Good morning and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Savino Quatela:** My name is Savino Quatela. I arrived in Canada from Italy in 1966. I am a resident in the city of North York. Today I ask myself, is Ontario, Canada, as good as it was in 1966, 1976, 1986 and 1996? My personal answer is no. Ontario is good no more. Ontario citizens need a general protest, the European way, to stop the Mike Harris government from acting in an undemocratic way, just like a dictator. The referendum is the best way to let him know what people want, and he should respect the voice of the people, whether it is yes

or no. Mussolini once said, "Live one day as a lion or 100 days as a sheep."

Please don't insult the beauty of the lifestyle of each Ontario citizen by dumping the load of social services on my municipality and on my property tax. My taxes will go up — you can't deny that — and services will go down. My family and I enjoy the services we receive, and I know we will lose them under the megacity.

The Crombie commission appointed by this government was against downloading social services. Why wouldn't Harris listen to his own people? Damn you, Mike Harris. If you and your government are not able to maintain these vital programs that we have paid for through our income taxes, then you should call an election. No one gave you the right to change Ontario for the worse. At the very least, the Tories should respect and accept the result of this referendum.

This government speaks from both sides of its mouth. From one side of their mouth they have the referendum legislation; from the other side they say, "We don't care how people vote in the referendum." Mike Harris is saying: "We'll do what we want anyway. We won't listen and we don't care what the people of Metropolitan Toronto say."

I know the proverb says, "The rich with the rich and the poor with the poor." I am happy to be on Robin Hood's side. Please don't destroy all those honourable citizens, because their hands and brains have built Ontario. I urge your government not to dishonour hard-working taxpayers with this legislation.

Mister Premier, there is no greater gift than the gift of giving the opportunity of a better quality of life to a human being: a senior citizen, a child, a youth, the disabled and the unemployed. I don't want a megacity. Please don't get rid of my city. Give me this gift.

I want to thank the committee for letting me exercise my right of free speech and my say on the megacity issue.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please.

**Mr Quatela:** I want to encourage the government, go see the books. There are a billion ways we can fix what is the matter.

Whatever he said, I keep as a souvenir, to have when the people promise something. If you're not able to do your job, resign. If you are not able to do the promise, it is better not to stay in those seats. Thank you very much.

**Ms Maria Rizzo:** Mr Chair, members, my name is Maria Rizzo and I am the North York councillor in the city of North York for ward 5. I am here today with Mr Quatela to represent the views of virtually thousands of people, thousands of residents who have had no voice in this process. The reason for that is that their first language is not English and this is a very intimidating process for them. Bill 103 will have devastating effects on the quality of life they presently enjoy and they want me to give you a very clear message: They do not want any part of a megacity. I urge the government to withdraw this legislation before it's too late.

People from all sides have come forward against the megacity — Liberals, New Democrats, Tories and people

who are unaligned. I received a letter about a week ago from a lifelong Conservative member, an urban developer, Mr Joe Sorbara, QC, and I want to tell you some of the things he says. He wrote a letter to Minister Leach and it was delivered to him on February 19. I quote:

"There is no question that the people of this province, myself included, elected a Conservative government to implement the policies set out in the Common Sense Revolution. However, on this issue I believe that the power and the right to govern have gone too far. I do not believe that implicit in the Tory election and consequent mandate was the authority of the elected representatives to change the municipal structure and world in which the citizens of Metro Toronto live, without further consultation.

"Public hearings do not constitute the type of consultation that I believe would be required to meet the test of fairness and democracy. In my view, any plan for municipal goverment has to be sold and not merely rammed down the throats of the people through majority government. Such an action is democracy in theory only.

"Without, at the very least, a delay in the enactment of the enabling resolution to give time to inform the citizenry more fully, I would have to vote no in any local referendum seeking to determine support for the megacity."

Even an urban developer, even your own friends, are saying, "No, this isn't good enough for me, the megacity, and I will be voting no in the referendum." In my view, this megacity proposal and the way it's been handled by the government have upset me more and offended more than any other action taken by any government in Canada for as long as I can remember.

What got me into politics in the first place was the belief that citizens have a right to fully participate in decision-making, that government has an obligation to make sure the public fully understands the effects of any changes it is planning to make, and that the best decisions affecting communities are those that come from the bottom up, rather than from the top down.

The megacity and all the legislation that comes with it, such as the downloading of social services on to the property tax, will dramatically change our way of life. It will, in my opinion, make it much worse. To have a decision of this magnitude imposed against the will of the majority is to me unthinkable in a democracy. If the majority say they want a megacity, I am prepared to accept that, even though I may disagree. I expect the government to do the same.

1130

What if Mr Harris and Mr Leach are wrong? What if Mayor Lastman and John Sewell and Joyce Trimmer and Joe Sorbara and Alan Redway and Anne Golden and Jane Jacobs are right? If the megacity turns out to be a disaster, how will it be fixed? We all know how easy it is to scramble an egg. Have you ever tried to unscramble one?

I believe the changes being proposed will pit the young against the old and the old against the young, the rich against the poor and the poor against the rich, the educated and the skilled against the uneducated and the

unemployable, tenants against homeowners and Metro Toronto against the rest of the province. Instead of bringing us together, I believe the megacity will tear us apart.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Rizzo. There's very little time for questions. Order please, ladies and gentlemen. Each time I have to ask for order, we lose an opportunity for questions. Mr Stewart, we're down to a minute.

**Mr R. Gary Stewart (Peterborough):** One question, back to you, sir. You might like to know that this government has put 372 new drugs on the formulary in the last year.

To you, ma'am, the mayors came up with a proposal to make some changes. Why do you believe that you, as part of the governance of this area, did not come up with a proposal sooner? Do you believe in the status quo?

**Ms Rizzo:** Yes, I do, as a matter of fact.

**Mr Stewart:** You believe in the status quo.

**Ms Rizzo:** If it's not broken, don't fix it. It is absolutely working. We have exactly what we want in the city of North York. We are well represented by our local politicians, as far as I am concerned. Our community and the city of North York have the best services for the people in a very diverse culture across the entire metropolis. And 600,000 people, thank you very much, is just plenty for us.

**Mr Stewart:** I have listened to people who believe in the status quo —

**Ms Rizzo:** I don't subscribe to that theory. I do not subscribe to that.

**Mr Stewart:** But you said, "If it's not broke, don't fix it." Don't you think we should do a little maintenance to it? If we had reinvented the wheel —

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Order, ladies and gentlemen. Mr Stewart, thank you very much for your questions. We've exhausted the time.

**Ms Rizzo:** Mr Stewart, all I want to say to you is that even if you want change and you support change —

**Mr Stewart:** We used to ride on stone wheels too.

**Ms Rizzo:** Even if you want change, don't, as Mr Sorbara said, ram it down people's throats. Have a process by which we're part of deciding the future of our society, of our cities, of our communities, of our neighbourhoods. That's all we're asking for.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Rizzo, and thank you, Mr Quatela.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please, ladies and gentlemen. I've had this conversation several times with many of you about outbursts and audience participation. This is a forum for presentations by those coming forward to make those presentations and we do have time lines. I want to hear everyone who's here. Every time I have to stop and make an announcement, I lose that ability, so please keep in order.

#### JOE MIHEVC

**The Chair:** Would Joe Mihevc please come forward. Good morning, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Joe Mihevc:** Thank you. First of all, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address the committee on this very important issue.

I realize there have been many speakers before me who have developed several good arguments for why Bill 103 needs to be sent back to the drawing-board. The key arguments have included the following points: A megacity will lead to property tax increases, even before the downloading outlined in mid-January; a mega-Toronto will be more expensive to run, as an enlarged bureaucracy will need to be developed to maintain an effective span of control for management; a megacity will be less democratic, given the size of their new wards; furthermore, the increased responsibilities at city hall will limit councillors' ability to interact with their constituencies.

For these reasons, as Wendell Cox has pointed out, in the United States there is virtually no jurisdiction currently pursuing amalgamation as a strategy for more effective, efficient and democratic local government. But rather than focus on these points, I would like to focus on four other points that, as I've perused the debate, have not been elaborated on significantly.

The first is that megacity threatens people's sense of identity. Bill 103 is being opposed by so many from so many different quarters across Metro because it is an assault on people's feelings of identity. Perhaps speakers have not focused on this too much because of the way in which the debate has circled around more quantifiable issues of taxation, roles and responsibilities. But feelings of identity are also powerful factors at play here and need to be considered by anyone wanting to make changes to governance structures in Metro.

We know that feelings of identity are a difficult thing to pin down; yet we see all over the world that when people's identify is threatened, all hell can break loose. The native country of my parents, which is the former Yugoslavia, is a fine example of how intensely people feel their ethnic and religious identity. If you push people's sense of who they are, they see no alternative but to push back as hard as they can.

In my own case, I've been back to Slovenia only a couple of times, but I feel my identification with my parent's home country very deeply. As Canadians, while we may not be able to name what makes our Canadian identity very clearly, we know that we feel it deeply, as witnessed by the Montreal rally in October 1995 before the Quebec referendum. Perhaps it doesn't make logical sense, but it makes emotional sense to know your identity by way of history and place.

Identity has to do with how people construct their sense of who they are. Identity has to do with how we feel we link with a particular place and with a particular people and communities. Without a sense of one's identity, we can lose our compass in life and risk losing our psychological health.

I believe Bill 103 assaults our feelings of identity here in Metro Toronto. People have deep feelings of connectedness with some aspect of local government. Perhaps it's city hall, a particular political personage, or a committee to which they've contributed, or a neighbourhood park, a library, a local program. They do not feel that local government is something outside of themselves but

something they have brought inside themselves, that is, within their identity.

The demonstrations, the countless meetings, the organizing and the deputations reflect a grass-roots reaction to the assault on people's identity. It would be wrong to think of this movement as centrally organized. Believe me, this feeling of assault on people's identify is something very deep and powerful, even in little York, and I believe in the rest of Metro as well. The anger I have heard expressed in person and over the phone about Bill 103 reflects how deeply people across Metro feel about their sense of place.

I would recommend to the government not to disturb the sense of Toronto the Good that people have without their consent. You do so at your political peril and at our loss of community cohesion.

My second point has to do with a perspective on the future of York. I do think that identities shift and grow. I believe that one generation's sense of identity is not another's. Demographic changes have been occurring in York more rapidly than anywhere else in Metro Toronto. I believe that many, indeed most, of the citizens of York want change. Many citizens have spoken to me about wanting to pursue an option with the city of Toronto, a possible merger. Our housing stocks are similar, our borders are very long and don't make much sense, our tax bases are uneven. I can say that many people in York feel an identification with the city of Toronto.

We want a chance to pursue this alternative. We do not want megacity but want a chance to develop an alternative. This is where I think our people are ready for change, a change that can be defended not only on financial and service-level grounds but also on the qualitative ground of formally merging the identities of two similar sets of community.

We were on the road to working out a plan for merging York and Toronto before Bill 103 was introduced. We want to return to work as soon as possible on that plan to make appropriate changes in time for the next municipal election. I urge you to scrap Bill 103 and allow us that opportunity.

My third point has to do with the referendum process. York council struggled hard to discern the best response for York to the introduction of Bill 103. A referendum was chosen because of our sense that many people felt a change in the structure — that's a key word, the structure — of local government was one that required their direct consent.

1140

York has followed the rules for conducting referenda as passed by the provincial government in mid-December 1996. York's referendum is following your rules, not ours. Furthermore, it is the provincial government's responsibility to maintain the lists through the provincial assessment office. It is terribly disturbing to see provincial officials now mocking the referendum process. Minister Leach's displaying his envelope with his ballot and his name on it, claiming that the ballot is not secret, is misleading and disrespectful to people legitimately trying to express their democratic will.

Claiming that the lists are out of date, suggesting that the municipalities are at fault, is misleading. How can the

people of Metro Toronto trust your abilities to manage a transition to megacity if you cannot keep up the lists to your own satisfaction? It is unfair to set the rules and encourage people to play the game, only to criticize the process if the result is not going your way. The not-so-subtle message is that you will allow democracy through referenda only when the result agrees with your intention.

In York we are running a fair referendum. The clerk's responsibility is to ensure that the vote represents the will of the people in York. His office is not involved in any advocacy work on one side or the other.

When your government sets the rules and then does not play by them and contends that you will not respect the results, I believe that your moral authority to govern is in question. Why should anyone obey any laws when those who make the laws obey them only when it suits their needs? Your government's open contempt of the referendum process is an affront to the rule of law in a democratic society.

I've often said in public fora in York that what makes good public policy basically has three footstools to it: support from political leadership, support from the community, and support from professionals in the field. If the three come together on an issue, then the issue can and should go forward.

The megacity legislation only has the first element, political support, and even that is precarious given the discontent that many a backbencher is quietly voicing. The referendum will display the extent of the second leg of the stool. The opinion of urban planners, social service analysts, and financial planners is overwhelmingly against megacity. The body of professional opinion is clearly against your proposal.

Assuming that there is a No vote, I would suggest to you that you lack the minimum criteria for proceeding. You will lack two of the three bases for developing good public policy.

In York, we are well aware that local government structures need to change in Metro and in the GTA. We are more than willing to participate in transforming what we have into what we want. The megacity proposal unfortunately fails to address, even in a minimal way, our basic problems. I urge you to withdraw the legislation and to facilitate a broader participatory process for urban renewal in York, Metro and the GTA. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Mihevc. We've effectively used your allotted time. I want to thank you for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### SHELDON LIPSEY

**The Chair:** Would Sheldon Lipsey please come forward. Good day, Mr Lipsey. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Sheldon Lipsey:** Thank you. I'm speaking as a private citizen and a resident of Toronto since 1954. While I have lived in other cities for short periods of my life, I have a deep attachment to Toronto, along with a strong sense of the rightness of things.

Before I go on, I would like to say that while I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the committee,

there are many others who, because of the government's actions in limiting these hearings, are being denied that opportunity. This is in itself a grave injustice, an act of contempt for the democratic process. Fortunately, it is one still within the government's power to correct by extending the hearings so that everyone who wishes to speak can be heard. I hope you will recommend this to your government.

Bill 103 is wrong. It is an unprecedented, immoral, mean-spirited, arbitrary, anti-democratic, totalitarian and even illegal piece of legislation. It is wrong in both what it does and the way it does it. I am opposed to Bill 103 in any form, present or amended. It should be withdrawn and allowed to die unmourned.

The first mistake in Bill 103 was to steal the name of Toronto. As John Sewell has pointed out, history shows that autocratic regimes like to name cities and monuments after themselves, so why not Harrisburg or Leachtown? If I were in favour of amalgamation, which I'm not, I'd quite like the name Leachtown, because then we could be twinned with the other Leachtown in Canada. That one's located on the west coast, about 30 to 35 miles outside of Victoria on Vancouver Island. Twinning would be particularly appropriate because the west-coast Leachtown used to be a bustling mining town in the 19th century. Then, when the gold was all mined out, the town fell on hard times, so much so that no trace of it remains today except an abandoned mine shaft. A suitable metaphor, I think, for what the government is attempting to do to Toronto.

Bill 103 is wrong in substance because no one asked for the changes it proposes. The bill has been opposed by every expert or commission studying it and even by the government's own friends. It creates chaos and uncertainty where before there was relative order.

Bill 103 is also morally wrong in its approach to the issue of governance. Imposing trusteeship on municipal governments that were democratically elected, are not bankrupt and have committed no crime is dictatorship. What else can you call it? When China imposed trusteeship on Hong Kong, even using the same language of "restructuring municipal government" and "smooth transition," Canada's foreign affairs minister sent a diplomatic note to China calling the move undemocratic and asking China to respect the wishes of the Hong Kong people. Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic refused to recognize the results of municipal elections and faced three months of massive demonstrations before he finally agreed to do the right thing.

Right here in Ontario, the government's advertising campaign for the megacity has been found in contempt by the Speaker of the Legislature, and only yesterday a judge ruled that imposing trusteeship was illegal before the legislation was in place. How many hints does this government need that it is doing something wrong?

There just aren't any commonsense arguments in favour of Bill 103. I don't believe it will save money. Experts say that previous experience in other cities shows large amalgamated cities cost more per capita than smaller cities. I don't for a moment buy the "one fire chief instead of six" argument. The fire chief of a city of 2.3 million people is going to need deputy chiefs, local stations, geographically based divisions — in short, a

large bureaucracy, probably larger than what we have now.

How many is too many local politicians: one elected official for 50,000 residents, one per 40,000, or one for every 5,300 residents as in North Bay? So who's overrepresented?

"The mayors are only looking out for their own jobs." This is perhaps the most mean-spirited, evil argument of all. The mayors were all democratically elected; some have been in office a good deal longer than the government, and none has been accused of any wrongdoing that I know of, except perhaps defending their city.

Bill 103, I concluded, only makes sense as part of a move by the provincial government to strip power from the municipalities and take control of the revenues they raise. The government couldn't just walk in and steal the money, so Bill 103, which puts municipal reserve funds under trusteeship, Bill 104, which removes educational spending from local school boards, and the downloading of social services were devised to that end. A power grab is the only plausible explanation.

Having trustees and a transition team oversee and approve municipal spending seems to ensure that the government will be able to siphon off money to help it pay for its 30% tax cut, not to mention that the transition team can appoint bureaucrats, make contracts, and privatize public services, all with no accountability.

So 103, 104 and downloading are really one massive attack on Toronto. It was the Toronto Star, one of this government's most enthusiastic cheerleaders on the megacity issue, that despite its own rhetoric about there being no connection between the issues let this particular cat out of the bag. In an editorial on February 1, the Star suggested that we needed the megacity because otherwise Harris's axe — cutting subsidies and dumping social service costs on to the city — would result in "fiscal ruin" for York, East York, and Scarborough. Pardon me, but if the province is dumping costs on to a lower level that can't raise the revenues to pay for them, how will creating a megacity solve anything? Fiscal ruin is fiscal ruin, whether York, East York and Scarborough go bankrupt immediately or the megacity goes bankrupt in six months or a year or two years.

### 1150

I said at the outset that I thought Bill 103 was illegal. I realize legislation gives the province the power to make or break municipalities, but that's not all there is to our legal system. To my understanding, there are actually five components: (1) the Constitution, which sets out such things as the division of powers between federal and provincial governments; (2) statutes and regulations; (3) case law, the law of the courts as expressed in judicial decisions based on precedents provided by past decisions; (4) the writings and opinions of judges and legal experts; and (5) perhaps most important, convention and custom which, simply stated, prescribe what governments ought or ought not to do, such as not act unilaterally or ignore public opinion.

A major characteristic of our common law system — this from the Canadian Encyclopedia — is the doctrine of the supremacy of the law, which originally meant that not even the king was above the law. Today it means that

acts of governmental agencies are subject to scrutiny in ordinary legal proceedings. Clearly, Bill 103 fails that crucial test. So not only is it arbitrary and anti-democratic, I think it's as illegal as robbing a convenience store. Only this isn't a convenience store, it's Metro Toronto that's being heisted.

Bill 103 moves spending authority and decision-making power from the municipal to the provincial level, from elected representatives to appointed minions of the government. It is so far outside the Canadian parliamentary tradition that I agree with those who have described it as a bloodless coup whose authors are guilty of treason.

This government can still turn back. The embarrassment of withdrawing Bill 103 will be slight and transitory compared to the chaos, unrest and even civil disobedience to which it will certainly give rise if it is passed into law. Is this what you want the Harris government to be remembered for?

Dr Martin Luther King Jr, in his letter from Birmingham Jail of April 16, 1963, on the subject of civil disobedience, probably best put into words the sense of outrage at injustice, and the quiet determination to overcome it, of citizens treated with contempt by their government. King wrote:

"There are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St Augustine that 'an unjust law is no law at all.'"

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Lipsey. You have effectively used all of your allotted time, but I want to thank you for coming forward to present to the committee today.

#### MOIRA DUNPHY

**The Chair:** Would Moira Dunphy please come forward. Good morning, Ms Dunphy. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes to make a presentation.

**Ms Moira Dunphy:** Before I start, I'd just like to say that I'm hoping that while I'm here today — I know everybody gets a copy of this speech — you'll actually be listening and not just reading. I'm here today and I didn't send in a letter because I have never, ever felt more strongly that my future in this city has been threatened, and this is why I've come out personally here today.

My name is Moira Dunphy and I'm the community liaison for my home, the Charles Hastings Housing Co-op in downtown Toronto. At least a dozen of my co-op neighbours felt strongly enough about the impact of this bill on our community that they filed requests to speak before this committee. Since I do not believe any of them will get that opportunity, I feel the burden is on me to represent them here today.

My co-op has only 91 apartments. My neighbours are students, families, gays and seniors. My neighbours speak English, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Italian, Yugoslavian and Arabic. My neighbours vote Liberal, Tory and NDP. Some of my neighbours own

their own businesses, some have successful careers, while others need to use food banks. What we have in common is our beautiful home. We work together on committees. We attend several members' meetings each year. We lovingly tend our rooftop gardens in the summer, sharing advice and seedlings. We have celebrated together many holidays, births, adoptions, farewells and the lives of our deceased friends. My neighbours run errands for those who are disabled, care for those who are ill and accept all newcomers. I am very proud to say that my home does not start at my apartment door, but at the front door of my building.

After 12 years of self-government through a member-elected board of directors, we have learned how to be most effective. When our co-op has faced a crisis or a need for change, we work hard to communicate clearly and to allow all members to have input before any decisions are made.

Not only is our co-op diverse, but so is our immediate community. In our neighbourhood on the edge of Chinatown, there are student residences, single-family dwellings and non-profit housing as well as condominiums. We also have several people who have made their home on two hot-air grates within a block from us, in a shelter, and at a church that participates in the Out of the Cold program.

In spite of these broad economic differences, our neighbourhood works. I have never felt in danger at night walking the streets in my neighbourhood. It is not by chance that we survive side by side. We do so because of the efforts of our local city council. My co-op knows this at first hand.

A few years ago, a bar opened under new management next door and we started experiencing difficulties. They were serving after hours and serving minors, to name but two infractions, and we had to deal with the resulting noise and violence when they spilled out on to the street every night. Our city councillor, Dan Leckie, and our Metro councillor, Olivia Chow, were both quick to respond. They helped us in our dealings with the police and the LLBO and set up a meeting with our members, the police, themselves and the bar owners.

Do not think for a second that my co-op believes it will be business as usual with only 44 councillors on a new megacity council. The math is very clear. With only one representative for a much larger riding, our voice and representation is weaker. You can spin us a web of words such as "efficiencies and an end to wasteful duplication" but the reality is that most of our councillors' time is spent in direct consultation with citizens, working on local issues and projects. Since both our Toronto and Metro councillors work long hours, our new councillor, in a much larger riding, will not be able to do the same amount of work. So who picks up the slack? Volunteer neighbourhood councillors with no legal power won't do it. Citizens are already donating massive volunteer hours on local issues. No: Either work previously done by our councillors will simply be cut or will be performed by public servants. Why would anyone want to replace an elected representative with a bureaucrat?

This government says we apparently want less government in our lives. It makes no sense to remove and

weaken the only level of government with which we have any direct input. My Metro councillor attends an average of 20 community meetings a week. My Toronto councillor's office takes an average of 375 phone calls a week from constituents. That's about 19,000 calls a year. The majority of these calls are from people who are the most vulnerable and marginalized in our society: citizens who live in a building whose landlord shuts off the heat in the middle of winter; neighbours with a crack house on their street; a neighbourhood with a high density of both commercial and residential buildings requiring smart governance to keep their interests balanced.

Once you upset the balance in my neighbourhood, the mobile upper and middle classes will move, impacting on our local small businesses and leaving the poorer and less mobile in an economically depressed area.

I do not understand why Al Leach continues to insist that the megacity was all part of the Tories' election campaign. If that is so, then why did Mr Leach himself prepare a report that promised to strengthen local government and abolish regions? Why did Mr Harris himself say over two years ago that "services always cost more in larger municipalities"?

Perhaps this government did not expect so many Torontonians to care so much about their homes. Perhaps this is why they did not live up to their own words about listening to the voice of the people and have instead worked hard to discredit it every step of the way.

Al Leach says it would take at least 13 questions to have a proper referendum on this issue. I suppose if he were actually to start from scratch and look at every possibility, there could be 13 different options. But if he were to look at every possibility, and he did so in an acceptable and agreed-upon process of consultation, he would never need a referendum, because he'd have the people alongside with him. This referendum is not meant to choose the governing model of our cities. It is in answer to a specific governing model being imposed without choice. Al Leach has offered only one choice, so there is one only one question on the referendum ballot.

#### 1200

The day I found out I would get my chance to be heard at these meetings, I attended a downtown meeting at which Al Leach spoke. I was surprised at the end of his speech when he held up his referendum ballot — the envelope — and said: "Yes, a secret ballot — it's got my name on it right here. How secret is that?" I got up during question period and told him I was very concerned for his peace of mind, and that as a scrutineer making sure the election procedures are being followed, I would be happy to take him down to city hall and reacquaint him with the process outlined by his own ministry's act.

As the meeting wore on and Mr Leach began to look a little more lost on the stage, it occurred to me that perhaps he really is concerned about his own vote being secret. "Could it be," I wildly thought to myself, "that Al is having second thoughts and wants to vote no, and that's why he's worried about confidentiality?" But soon I began to regret my choice of being flippant with the minister. I grew angrier that he took such a deliberate and false stab at the referendum when he actually knew that

the label on the secrecy envelope was to ensure that it is a valid ballot. I belong to three national associations that use this method when they have to hold nationwide votes. He did this ballot waving in front of the cameras and, sure enough, it was on the news that night with no follow-up explanation. I would not doubt that he convinced more than a few voters to remove the label in order to ensure their privacy, which would make it a spoiled ballot.

Mr Leach now leaves me with two choices. Living in a co-op, I'm well aware that Mr Leach, as the housing minister, has been quoted as saying, "Everything I know about housing can be written on the head of a pin." So it's not much of a stretch for me to believe that he actually doesn't understand why his name is on the ballot envelope. My other choice, which I believe to be true, is to believe that he lied, knowing full well why his name was on the envelope. I believe that Mr Leach should apologize to the citizens of Toronto for lying in an attempt to undermine this referendum. Surely, of all people, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who created the act under which this referendum is possible, should be held accountable for contempt of a legal voting procedure.

There has not been such a strong local grass-roots movement in more than 20 years in this community. In my co-op alone, trust me, I expect a 95% to 100% turnout of eligible voters, and they are voting according to their conscience and not their party affiliations. I urge this government to throw out this bill in the face of such major opposition.

When I was president of my co-op's board a few years ago, I never would have dreamed of forcing an issue that faced widespread opposition. That would have meant I was not listening to the people who elected me, and it would have made my job a lot harder. With all six mayors against it, why force it on an unwilling population? Put aside Bill 103 and consult those affected. Do not be afraid of appearing weak and do not confuse blind stubbornness with strong leadership. You will be applauded for being responsive to the citizens you represent.

If you will not throw out Bill 103, then I strongly urge this government to allow its members to vote according to their conscience.

I understand that Mr Leach professes to watch the videotape of these proceedings each day, even though he has made it clear that he will not be affected by what is said here. Since he's not listening anyway, if you could ask him to fast-forward to this portion of the tape, I'll translate for him the essence of my message the way he would hear it:

Mr Leach, blahty blah bloo bloo blitty blah. Blahty blah blah blah, Mr Leach. Blah, blah, Mr Leach, blah. Blahty bloo blah blah, megacity. Blahty blah blahty bloo provincial elections.

Thank you for hearing me today.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Dunphy. You have now effectively exhausted your time, and I want to thank you for coming forward today and making your presentation.

## DAINA GREEN

**The Chair:** Would Daina Green please come forward. Good afternoon, Ms Green. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Daina Green:** Thank you very much. Greetings, honourable members. I'm here to raise my concerns about Bill 103 before this committee, which is charged with hearing submissions. I'd like to remind you that the committee is not just required to hear submissions; it's required to listen to them.

I am a self-employed resident of Toronto. I work and live here in the city of Toronto. I am also the chair of the Alliance for Employment Equity, which is a community and labour coalition of human rights advocates which last November took the Harris government to court for its unconstitutional repeal of the Employment Equity Act.

As Ontarians we like to think of ourselves as living in an open society. I'd like to start by quoting from George Soros, a successful financier who has recently been writing very thoughtfully about the underlying values of societies which think of themselves as open. Soros says:

"I envisage the open society as a society open to improvement. We start with the recognition of our own fallibility, which extends not only to our mental constructs, but also to our institutions. What is imperfect can be improved by a process of trial and error. The open society not only allows this process, but actually encourages it, by insisting on freedom of expression and protecting dissent."

Soros's thinking is very relevant to the legislative process. When Soros talks about recognizing our fallibility, he is saying that no one, and no party, has a monopoly on the truth. The government in power cannot know if its plan will work. This amalgamation plan could be a huge mistake. It could be wrong, as many people who have already come before you have argued today and other days. You must be prepared to be wrong, as your government has already been shown to be wrong. Here I am referring to putting trustees in place in defiance of the lack of legal mandate to do that. Other steps are much more difficult to undo once they have been taken. We heard earlier about the science of making omelettes and then putting the eggs back together.

Fallibility is also a concept which applies to the way our municipalities currently work. As Soros says, the trial-and-error process leads to improvement, and we have examples of this here. The city of Toronto, for example, is a recognized leader in fighting racism. The city of York is a recognized leader in local community economic development. Each of these municipalities went through a long period of trying out different approaches through trial and error. When a city finds an approach that works, other municipalities have often taken up that approach and improved upon it. This is a very healthy, pluralistic way of working that recognizes our inherent fallibility and also the value of creativity and openness. We would lose this if the government imposes Bill 103 on our cities.

Soros says that the open society not only allows dissent but actually encourages it by insisting on freedom of expression and protecting dissent. I would go further. It is a fundamental responsibility of a democratic govern-

ment to support dissent, especially when the dissenters do not have the same level of social, financial and political power as those in office.

It is the responsibility of government to make sure it hears and listens to the voices of those with least access to power. This government clearly does not agree. As a result, your committee is not hearing from those with the least access to power. You are hearing mainly from well-educated, white, able-bodied people like me who feel enfranchised enough to get themselves before you. You are not hearing from homeless people or from too many new immigrants or refugees who have yet to learn the ropes or who have yet to learn English. You are not hearing from housebound older people or people whose disabilities make it next to impossible for them to get to these hearings. These are people who rely very strongly on locally provided community services.

However, my impression is that the members of this committee are not very concerned about this lack. Why? Because this committee has very little mandate to listen. Al Leach has said that supporters of amalgamation do not come out because they have busy lives and they are at home watching television. What does this mean? Does it mean that government believes good citizenship means staying at home and being quiet? I find this an outrageous implication. That and other comments from the government show that this provincial government has no respect for active citizen participation. The word "activist" has become a dirty word. The government is attempting to discredit me and others who come before you by saying we are "those kind of activists, professional protesters" or something like this. You discredit the groups that want you to listen to our referenda on the basis that we are "self-interested," whatever that means.

You have also discredited many of us by saying we are against change. Nothing could be further from the truth. In my case, I have been a strong advocate of change: change to improve employment opportunities for groups facing discrimination, through employment equity; change of the power that workers have to join unions, through Bill 40, may it rest in peace; change in our taxation system through the workings of the previous Fair Tax Commission; and also changes in logging practices to protect natural resources and natural habitats.

You won't listen to me or other activists or concerned citizens who have come here before you. My question is this: Whom does this government listen to? Even if you are not listening, I must speak out. I must not be an accomplice to this dictatorial agenda. I too am worrying about what this is the first step to, and I'm old enough to know that after this step can come many more that lead us down a very dangerous path to the total loss of democracy.

Premier Harris has pretended that when some deputants refer to other pieces of legislation that are going forward at the same time as the amalgamation bill, we are confused. No, we are not confused. We understand that the reduction of city councillors and democratically elected representatives is most definitely linked to the destruction of school boards and the loss of elected public trustees. We know that your proposal to shift the burden of social services to municipalities is linked to a single municipal-

ity in the Metro Toronto area controlled by élite Torontonians, who are the only ones rich enough to run for the offices successfully.

The imposition of unelected trustees with unlimited powers is most definitely linked to the strategy to sell off public services like water supply and sewer services, it's linked to defunding of environmental watchdog agencies and it's linked to your despicable tax cut, which is only a way to give rich people money that people in need are entitled to be getting from all of us. They are entitled to these social services, not as charity; it's part of our community commitment. This particular bill is just one part of a huge power grab, and you are trying to take power away from us, the citizens of Ontario.

In closing, I would like to leave you with these three thoughts. First, you have no mandate to proceed with amalgamation of the municipalities that make up Metro Toronto. This was not part of your election platform or of any other plan. This is an unnecessary, divisive, destructive and harebrained scheme that you came up with at the last minute, and we reject it.

Second, you must under no circumstances reduce the number of elected representatives who make decisions on our behalf at the municipal level. You are claiming to do this in the name of fewer politicians since for you "politician" is a dirty word. I see right through this. You really want to enshrine less elected representation of citizens and residents. This is an outright attack on democracy and we reject it.

Third and finally, you must withdraw this bill. In its place you should move immediately to put in place a process by which representatives of all constituencies within the greater Toronto area can develop a workable mechanism for the coordination of services, coordination of purchasing and for planning. We need a truly open society. Thank you.

**Mr Colle:** The point is that, as you know, this government has stated categorically from day one that it's not going to listen to the referendum. Now they're trying to do their best to discredit the referendum because they know from their own polling that they're going to lose it. They know they've basically touched a nerve and they underestimated people's intelligence.

What happens when this government boldly says on March 4, "We don't care what you said," and 70% of the people of Metro vote against megacity? What do we do then?

**Ms Green:** I think the government will make some cosmetic changes and say: "See? We listened." We reject that.

**Mr Colle:** You're not going to buy that cosmetic approach.

**Ms Green:** No. This is a bad idea.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Green, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

We will recess until 3:30.

*The committee recessed from 1213 to 1533.*

**The Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the standing committee on general government. The first deputant is Salome Loucas.

**Mr Colle:** On a point of order, Mr Chair: Before we begin, there are just a couple of things I want to clear up.

As you know, we had invited the now illegal trustees to appear before the committee, and I guess at that time, because it was before the courts, they were advised by their legal counsel not to appear. I would still like to have them appear since, as the minister mentioned in the House today, they have made a number of recommendations to municipal councils in the last couple of months while they have been acting. On behalf of my party, I reaffirm our desire to have them appear before this committee as soon as possible.

**The Chair:** We can note that and extend an invitation to them as private citizens.

**Mr Colle:** Second, I had asked the legal staff of municipal affairs to give us a couple of examples where the proviso about decisions of the trustees or other officials being not subject to judicial review and their decisions being final had been done before in the Municipal Act or in municipal governance legislation. I haven't received any information on that and I want to put on the record that I'm still waiting for those examples from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

**The Chair:** Do you want to respond to that or just duly note it?

**Mr Paul Jones:** Duly noted.

**Mr Colle:** They're not ready yet then?

**Mr Jones:** Not that I'm aware of. I will check.

**The Chair:** I'll reiterate that to Mr Gilchrist when he comes in.

#### WOMEN WORKING WITH IMMIGRANT WOMEN

**The Chair:** Sorry for the interruption. The first deputant is Salome Loucas. You have 15 minutes to make your presentation.

**Ms Salome Loucas:** First of all, the pronunciation of my name is Salome, which means peace.

**The Chair:** I apologize.

**Ms Loucas:** I'm representing Women Working with Immigrant Women, which is an umbrella organization of 20 community-based agencies providing services to immigrant and refugee women and women of colour. The organization was established in 1974, and it identifies the educational, employment and health care needs of immigrant and refugee women and women of colour and initiates and sponsors in collaboration with other community organizations the development of community programs and services to meet those needs. It produces educational and training materials for the community and it does public education on issues of access and equity.

First, I would like to remind this committee that, according to statistics, by the year 2000 54% of the Metro population will be racial minorities. This means that larger numbers of those who will be affected by Bill 103 and the proposed changes are racial minorities.

For years, Women Working with Immigrant Women has advocated for coordination of services and for structural changes that facilitate the political participation of racial minorities. We believe, however, that this bill is yet another attack on issues of access and equity and on racial minorities and that the proposed new structure not only does not facilitate the political participation of our

communities but will alienate and hinder further this participation.

Although it has been argued that people confuse Bill 103 with the issue of downloading, we believe that the purpose of Bill 103 is to eliminate elected bodies and replace them with appointed bodies to eliminate local opposition in order to clear the way for the downloading of services from the provincial to the municipal government, a move that will have disastrous effects on our communities.

To explain what I mean by that, years of experience show that during hard economic times and times of high unemployment, racial minorities become the target of hate crimes and racism and they are accused as abusers of social programs. We believe that when people are asked to pay through property tax for services such as public housing and welfare, the hate crimes and racism will increase. We have no reason to trust a government which was elected as a result of its attacks on our communities, we have no reason to trust a government which eliminated provincial funding for anti-racism education and we have no reason to trust a government which tells us that it will not take into consideration the results of a vote on this bill.

What is quite interesting is that the sections of the bill that deal with the protection of the powers and the decisions of these appointed bodies, the transition team and the board of trustees, were well thought out and clearly defined. However, sections that deal with the powers of local councils and local participation, supposedly through neighbourhood committees, have not been clearly defined. We, the people, have to wait until later and until it is too late to find out how we will participate in this great Mr Harris-made democracy.

We are told that amalgamation will eliminate local competition. How exactly does this new structure eliminate local competition? Will not regional councils have to compete with each other for adequate resources to meet the needs of their constituencies? Will each regional council not have to convince two million people and all other regional councils that a program or a service is needed in its particular region?

1540

WWIW believes that volunteer neighbourhood committees don't facilitate public participation or accountability. In our experience, volunteering is a luxury that many people, particularly from our communities, cannot afford. The reason for this is that many people from our communities don't have the time to volunteer, because they're struggling to adjust in a new society, they are struggling in low-paying, deadend jobs and they experience language barriers. In addition, and most importantly, in our experience, even when we participate, we are not heard.

Our position is that change is needed and coordination of programs and services is needed. However, we do not support this particular proposal because we believe that it will alienate our communities and because of the undemocratic process by which these changes are being made.

What we would like to suggest is that the government stops the implementation of this bill immediately; that the government takes into consideration what people said in

these hearings and develops a new proposal; and that the government respects the right of people to vote on this issue, a right for which people gave their lives.

Our advice to this government is, either listen to what people are saying or take a good look around you, because you will not see the inside of this building ever again.

*Interruption.*

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, most of you have been here before, and you know the rules of the place. Just like being in the chamber, you're not allowed to have outbursts or participation from the audience. I'd appreciate it if you'd keep that to a minimum. I'd like to say that at the outset. Thank you. Mr Marchese, you have plenty of time for questions.

**Mr Marchese:** Thank you, Mr Maves, you're very kind. Ms Loucas, I heard your last comments, and I'm not quite sure whether they're going to pick that up. We feel that this movement of people who have come forward feels very strongly about keeping local government, as you do; they wouldn't be here otherwise. I have never seen, in my history of provincial politics, so many individuals who have come, worried about what's happening to their city. I have heard evidence, testimony from individuals, with a tremendous range of feelings and expertise; yours is yet another one.

Mike Harris used to say that big wasn't necessarily good. In fact, he used to say it would cost more. He's changed his mind. Do you think having a bigger municipality to deal with is going to give you a better say, is going to give you more access to this big mega-government? What is your sense of that?

**Ms Loucas:** As I said in my presentation, we are very concerned because local participation is going to be through neighbourhood committees. I explained that we feel that volunteer participation doesn't facilitate accountability, doesn't facilitate political participation, particularly for people from our communities, who are struggling with language barriers, who are struggling to adjust in a new society. Even when we participate, we are not heard. I don't see how, as people, we are going to have any input into the political life, if you want, of this city.

The other thing is that we know a lot of programs that benefit people from our communities are funded by different cities; not all of them, of course, but they are funded by different cities. Metro, for example, funds some of these programs and did play a leadership role on issues of access and equity. But what it means is that they are then going to have to find the money to make up for the funding we're going to be losing from the cities. Some programs are basically going to shut down. It's just a miserable \$300,000 that Metro has, basically, to fund the whole of Metro for this program. We're afraid we're going to lose even that amount of money. As I say, those are some of our concerns.

**Mr Marchese:** I'm happy to listen to your presentation particularly because we haven't had too many people who have come forward from the variety of the various communities we have here in Metropolitan Toronto, and it worries me, because some of those voices get lost in the process. I think your voice, obviously, alerts us to the kind of worries that many of our communities would

lose. In fact, some people who are not familiar with this process, who are intimidated by this process, are too frightened to come.

**Ms Loucas:** I was talking to a number of groups that had actually asked to make a presentation. They were not called. Also some people said they felt quite intimidated, because it is quite an intimidating process.

**Mr Marchese:** The minister and Mike Harris have used gut feelings to explain why there would be savings. They have no research — very little research, and the one they used, the KPMG study, which they quickly put together within 10 days, has been discredited by most credible sources. But other than that, there is no other research that supports the fact that amalgamation is going to save them money, which is the basis of why they've introduced this amalgamation bill. We have looked at research that says it's the opposite, that amalgamation is going to create this mega-government that will become more costly. Do you think it should be the burden of each individual citizen to come forward and disprove that, or should the burden be on the government to come and make its case?

**Ms Loucas:** I'm sorry, I'm not an economist or a politician.

**Mr Marchese:** I appreciate that. But my question was, do you think you should come up with those facts to prove or disprove what they're doing, or do you think the government, that has the resources, should?

**Ms Loucas:** I think they should come up with those facts. When I was reading the bill and I saw they're appointing all these different bodies, I didn't understand how they were going to be saving money. I still don't understand how they're going to be saving money if they eliminate elected bodies and then appoint other bodies to do administration or whatever, unless they're going to be working for free, which would be nice.

**Mr Marchese:** Of course I agree. I want to thank you for taking the time to come and represent the views of the organization and the views of many who I think are often disfranchised by this process and many other processes of the government. Thank you for coming, and I wish us all good luck.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Loucas, for coming forward today and making your presentation.

#### JANICE ETTER

**The Chair:** Would Janice Etter and Rhona Swarbrick please come forward. Good afternoon and welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes to make your presentation.

**Ms Janice Etter:** I'll try to hurry, then. You may have noticed that our names have come up and disappeared from this list three times in the last few weeks. We're so glad that actually happened, because every week that's gone by we've talked to more people on — I think there are more than two sides of this question — all sides of the question. It's been very revealing. In respect of those discussions with people of all points of view, we have set out to make this a 95% rhetoric-free brief. I hope we succeed in doing this. You'll find there's a fair bit of detail, particularly in the form of qualifying comments, in

your written copy that I don't expect to have time to read.

I'm Janice, by the way, and this is Rhona. We are residents of the city of Etobicoke. We are here to speak against Bill 103. I think I'd better tell you up front that we've been very deeply involved in a number of issues over the years at the municipal, Metro and provincial levels. We have worked, in different ways, with people from all political parties on these issues. In order to sustain the kind of involvement we've had, we've had to really work hard to understand the complexity of the issues and to really understand how the system works and how it could work better than it does now.

Others have spoken so eloquently about Bill 103 and the democratic process that we're simply going to state our strong agreement with and respect for what people like Jane Jacobs, Ursula Franklin and John Ralston Saul have said, and I see that Edmund Fowler was here this morning. Many others have already talked to this issue, so our comments are going to be focused on the other reasons why we can't support Bill 103 and the proposed megacity.

#### 1550

Our perspective is that of urbanites who had to find out the hard way how really different suburbs can be from cities. We're going to start by just saying up front that Bill 103 really frightens us. The best way to illustrate the reasons for our apprehension, we decided, was to tell you three brief stories.

The first one is something that took place at a meeting about a year ago regarding Etobicoke's capital budget. One of the presenters argued strongly that the city could save a lot of money by eliminating the planning department on the basis that the city, after all, is already built up, and therefore there won't be more new development going on.

We relate this story because there appeared to be councillors who thought this was actually not a bad idea and because it is indicative of the widespread suburban ignorance about cities. Cities that are economically, socially, physically and politically healthy are not static. They never stop growing and changing. They're dynamic, and the challenges posed by redevelopment are even more complex than those posed by new development.

The second story is something that happened, I'm sad to say, at a government MPP's town hall meeting just last week. In the context of these hearings, this is a story that we think begs to be told. A resident got up and asked about the possibility that an amalgamated Metro could lead to the same kind of downtown core deterioration that has come to characterize large American cities like Detroit. The MPP's response was: "Such a thing couldn't possibly happen here. Canada is not the United States. In Canada we have gun control legislation."

To us, this is a truly astonishing statement. It connects two things that have nothing to do with each other, and if it is reflective in any way of this government's level of understanding about what cities are and how they work, we have to tell you we think you have a moral responsibility to keep your hands off all urban centres and towns in this province.

Our third story is something that I read in the paper just a few days ago, on Saturday. In glowing terms, it described a new development in Barrie that "...is popular with commuters who appreciate that it's only a 40-minute drive to the north end of Metro. Shopping is convenient too — the community is five minutes away from megastores such as Wal-Mart, Michaels, Sobeys and others."

A year and a half ago, we had in place a Planning Act whose effect, over time, would have been to start curbing urban sprawl, decreasing dependency on private cars and protecting the natural environment. But large chunks of that bill were quickly amputated, and that wasn't good for Metro. It leaves us with the same anti-urban forces that have historically impeded the urbanization of the suburbs. These are the forces that have also impeded the development of positive, mutually supportive relationships between the city of Toronto and its suburbs, and also between Metro and the surrounding regions.

The point of these three stories is that we believe the legislative framework created by Bill 103 is inadequate to create and sustain a single municipality as big as Metro. There is no context of solid supporting policy and legislation about planning, transportation, urban ecology, social needs, cultural life, fair taxes, and a host of other matters.

We don't believe that the Toronto created by Bill 103 would be a better place for all its residents. It's likely to be insensitive to the variation and contradictions between its parts and their very different political cultures. I think the speaker before us spoke very clearly about some of these concerns.

I don't know how to say strongly enough that cities are not just political and economic constructs, and they're not simply dense, lucrative markets for business. They're living places where people of all kinds come together for mutual social, economic and cultural benefits, and everyone must be able to share in those benefits.

A lot of what we have to say about Bill 103 and what it means to us as people who are very involved in civic affairs in Etobicoke is rooted in the pattern of that city's development. It's really spread out, has highly segregated land use, has very few public focal points where people can gather, has very homogeneous neighbourhoods. Perhaps for us most important, there is a poorly developed sense of neighbourhood and community in large parts of the city, and the political culture and level of civic life reflects the city's sprawling physical structure and organization.

You won't be surprised, and you probably know from reading our papers in the last few months, that it can be maddeningly parochial, but we want you to know that working through the existing decision-making process and power structure is a daunting and frustrating task for most residents. For those in constituencies that are not recognized as politically significant, which again the previous speaker spoke of, it is prohibitive.

In short, we are people who are ready and waiting for change. We would have welcomed and tried to make the most of almost any proposal that promised hope that the problems inherent in our local government could be solved.

**The Chair:** Excuse me. You only have a minute remaining. I don't think you'll be able to get through that part at the top. You might want to go to your conclusion.

**Ms Etter:** Bill 103 and the megacity it would create offers no such hope to us at all. Rather it raises the spectre of a new municipal government that is even scarier than the one we have now. It does not address some of the most important problems we have experienced either in Etobicoke or in Metro and there remains a much-too-long list of outstanding questions. I'll leave you to read some of those questions on the paper, and I hope you will, because they're very serious questions.

We can't help but feel that something is terribly wrong when a government believes that it is acceptable to change the way people are governed, especially at the local level, without being able to substantiate a rationale for its actions or directly involving them in making the decision.

When I finished this up this morning I added at the end, when last did you check out that beautiful little quote of Junius that you find on the masthead of the *Globe and Mail*? Let me just remind you, it reads: "The subject who is truly loyal to the chief magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures." Before you challenge our use of the word "arbitrary," let me assure you I did check my dictionary. It means "based on or subject to opinion, judgement, prejudice, random choice or ideology," and we see behind Bill 103 an ideology that has not seen all of the variables in this discussion very clearly.

I hope it is obvious that we, as involved citizens of Metro and of Etobicoke, are loyal to the chief magistrate — and we use this term figuratively to mean the keeper of the law and the protector of the public interest. We never advise arbitrary measures, we are never happy to see prerogative exercised and we certainly have no intention of submitting to arbitrary measures.

**The Chair:** Ms Etter, we are well beyond the time now.

**Ms Etter:** One sentence, that's all. Our No vote in the referendum will not be a vote in support of the status quo, nor will it be a vote against Metro, and it's not even complete rejection of the idea of a unified city. It will be a vote against Bill 103 and against the added crushing weight of Bill 104, downloading and all of the other 100 series bills, not all of which are going to be going to public hearings.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for taking the time to put the presentation together and coming forward to give it to us today.

1600

#### HARMINDER BHULLAR

**The Chair:** Would Harminder Bhullar come forward. Good afternoon, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Harminder Bhullar:** Good afternoon, everybody. This provincial proposal to unify Toronto, East York, York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough and the regional government of Metro Toronto into one municipality called the city of Toronto is a wise move. The reasons for the justification of this amalgamation are

numerous and interestingly logical too. I would like to discuss a few of them.

Unification will end duplication and waste. Most Toronto area residents think there is too much unnecessary duplication and overlap. In some of the parks — for example, Earl Bales Park — the staff of one municipality are responsible to cut some of the grass and the staff of some other municipality have to do the rest of the job. If we have one police department and one transit commission, do we need six fire departments, seven roads departments, seven snow removal crews, six garbage pickup crews and seven parks departments? No, we don't need it at all.

Megacity offers a more accountable and less confusing system of local government. In a unified system, we will know to whom to talk about services and local issues. Instead of having to deal with two levels of government, that is, local municipality and Metro, we'll have only one.

Suppose you want to complain about a pothole that needs to be fixed. You will have to figure out whether it's a Metro road or a local road. Even if it is a Metro road, the local municipality may be responsible for the sidewalk. On top of that, Metro may be in charge of street lighting. A unified Toronto will put an end to the confusion. One council will be responsible and accountable.

Most important services are already amalgamated. As you know, garbage disposal, TTC, police, water and sewer treatment, ambulance, welfare, day care, homes for the aged, major roads and traffic signals are managed by Metro-wide government. Some 72% of city services are already amalgamated. Now it's time to bring the remaining services under one umbrella.

A unified Toronto is good news for small business. For someone opening a small business the current system of approvals and regulations is a tedious and confusing process. Six municipalities have different rules on everything from how to put up a sign outside your business to whether or not people can smoke in your restaurant.

Even municipal boundaries play a vital role in posing different rules and regulations for the same type of business. For example, if you own a restaurant on a boundary road like Victoria Park you may have different hydro rates and smoking regulations than the restaurant across the same road, just because different councils make different rules. This is not fair.

With a unified Toronto the days of confusing bylaws and multilayered approvals will be gone. A unified Toronto will have a better chance of bringing investment to the area, boosting the local economy and creating jobs. People outside of Metro don't understand where North York is, or Etobicoke, or Scarborough. They understand Toronto. They want to hear what Toronto can offer them.

This will also reduce the size of government. You don't need 106 councillors to make good decisions for the unified city; no need for seven mayors and seven administrations. The province's proposal will see a 44-member council. Each councillor would serve about 50,000 residents. Neighbourhood committees will be formed. They are usually volunteer, community-based

bodies that provide feedback and advice to the city council on the needs of the local community.

This will save money. Going from seven administrations to just one will cut costs. One administration means better coordination, more efficiencies and less bureaucracy. Financial experts KPMG estimate savings of about \$865 million over the first three years and \$300 million annually from there on. There is potential for savings. The outgoing mayors are on record as saying they could save \$280 million by simply killing the Metro level of government and leaving six cities and their jobs intact. If this is correct, imagine the savings by having just one city administration.

Services can be delivered at less cost. For example, North York is the only municipality that still offers twice-weekly garbage pickup and that too at a lower cost per household. Etobicoke has an award-winning library system that is the envy of many cities. A unified city will take the best practices from Metro and from around the world and use them to deliver good local services at the best price.

Amalgamation is the best way to sustain the city. Some of our six municipalities cannot sustain themselves. East York, York and Scarborough rely on subsidies from Metro.

Two more pressing realities face Metro Toronto. First, Mike Harris promises to reduce government, such as eliminating Metro. Second is the provincial plan to offload all the costs of the roads, transit and, inappropriately, an increasing share of social services and all social housing to municipalities. Metro municipalities cannot by themselves handle such extra costs.

One coordinated, unified city to deliver equitable services, regardless of the assessment wealth of its current individual cities, is our best chance to survive and thrive.

It's a natural evolution of our metropolis. The municipal map of 100 years ago shows scores of municipalities within the present Metro boundaries. By 1953 only 13 remained. In 1965 they were reduced to six. Today all of Metro is indeed one city: one economy, one people, one urban outlook, one regional taxation and one common culture. Amalgamation will merely put an official stamp on an urban reality.

No more lost opportunities: The Metro system has given us some successes by providing some important services across the Toronto area. In other ways it has failed its residents. Bickering between local and Metro politicians, battles over who has control, has left residents with the short end of the stick. Perhaps we would have won past Olympics bids or World's Fair bids if Toronto was a unified city and had promoted resources and attractions of the entire area.

Local governments have a crucial influence over how cities grow and develop. The current system of government has created a metropolitan area that is envied around the world. It has got unique, well-planned neighbourhoods, a thriving business community and well-developed cultural and artistic communities.

The current system is faltering now. It is not adaptable to today's environment, a metropolitan area with boundaries that don't make sense, an area that cannot compete effectively internationally because it doesn't speak with

one voice. Both academic research and experience have shown that the urban regions that work best are those that have a strong centre, a strong core. If Toronto is weak, the GTA is weak.

Metro-wide services are not a new idea. Some of the services people value the most are already provided Metro-wide. Some examples are police, public transit, day care, homes for the aged and public housing. Why not build on our successes, reduce wasteful duplication and provide more services across the Toronto area? Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. You've exhausted your entire allotted time, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward today and making your presentation.

1610

#### PETER MARCELLINE

**The Chair:** Would Peter Marcelline please come forward. Good afternoon, sir.

**Mr Peter Marcelline:** I'm just here as a private citizen, not representing any group or individual groups. I'm an urban planner by profession. I'd like to first thank the committee for selecting my name, because I never thought I'd be here, but I'm glad I got the opportunity.

Secondly, this is very interesting from the standpoint of history. This is Black History Month, and if you'll pardon my observation, when I look around this room, I don't see any black people in front of me. That's very significant, and I think if I didn't say it, then I'd be remiss. This government has done things which affect my community in particular, and we have to say it. I'm not speaking on behalf of that community. That's the black community or otherwise known as the African Canadian community. I know many of us don't get that opportunity to speak, so I think I'm speaking for thousands.

I support many of the comments, as you can see from my button, that have been said here against this megacity, this City of Toronto Act, 1996. I think it's awful; it's disgusting. It has not been well researched. It hasn't been thought out carefully and it seems to follow the pattern of this NonSense Revolution this government has put in place.

You may find me rambling because I didn't write a speech simply so that it's packaged neatly. Every day I was writing little bits and pieces so I have a whole bunch of stuff here. There's so much to say that I don't know where to start, but I'm going to tell you why I'm against this megacity concept.

We have had things in Toronto that work well. We have a two-tiered system of government that has served Metro very well. It has made Toronto the envy of other cities around the world, so much so that one of the major magazines, Fortune magazine, declared Toronto the most livable city in the world. Why do you want to destroy this? Why change it? Why fix it? If it ain't broke, why fix it?

The evidence shows that you don't have enough information. You've given us some concocted numbers from KPMG which don't stand any test. Those are the only figures we have to go by and we're not sure they

mean anything to anybody except probably the Harris government.

The quality and delivery of services have been exceptional, and the high standards which achieved serve as a model for other communities throughout Ontario and Canada. Many of the services are already carried out by the Metro level of government. They're already amalgamated, and I think the previous speaker said so. However, I part company with him when he says if we can bring the others together, it will be great, but of course we can't do that because we don't have the information.

This government has hijacked the democratic process. Therefore, it means that citizens like me who should be making an input here don't get that opportunity to do so. The lack of consultation with the very communities you are trying to amalgamate is really an abrogation of the democratic process, and I feel very angry about that, that you have taken away my right to come and speak, and not only me but thousands like me, to address you here.

I know many of you don't live in Toronto. You don't know what Toronto means. I have been involved in cultural activities in this municipality for over 27 years. I have been, and still am, a member of the Caribbean Cultural Committee, the committee that puts on the annual Caribana festival. I have been chair, I have been vice-chair and a number of positions that involve directors of this organization. It's the largest cultural festival of its kind in the country. How many of you have ever been to Caribana? You don't think it might be important. It brings more money into Toronto than any other festival in this whole Metropolitan region.

The other thing that I'm really unhappy about is this downloading. Why are you passing on the cost of your so-called NonSense Revolution to the municipalities? Why are you doing this? You're going to make it more difficult for us to live here and in the process what you're going to do is destroy a great city. If you download the cost, what it means is they either have to raise the taxes or cut services, or a combination of both. When that happens, you have the United States of America, urban America moving northwards into Canada so that the cores of the cities become empty and they're occupied either by the very rich in their gated communities or the poor, the homeless and the disfranchised, people who have little or no stake in the community in which they find themselves.

The job loss: By the minister's own declaration, some 4,500 jobs will be lost, some through attrition, many through layoffs, but we have unions in this place. You have CUPE, you have other unions, OPSEU, that have collective agreements, and all of us who are familiar with unions know that collective agreements reinforce the seniority clause.

Unfortunately for many of my community, minority workers, they are usually the last hired and — twist it around — they're first fired, first laid off. That's a historical experience we as black people have experienced here in North America and especially in the United States. If you read the history, you'll see that it's always been the same. We're last hired in spite of our education, our abilities, and as the recent study from the federal government shows, we black people have more education than the average Canadian, yet we continue to be at the

bottom end of the economic ladder with respect to jobs and income.

Why? Clear unadulterated racism; nothing else but that. The first thing this government did was to rescind the Employment Equity Act. It meant you were serving notice that you are trying to divide communities, to destroy communities, to make the playing field — instead of it being levelled a little more, you have tilted it so that now only certain groups are going to succeed here and we are going to be mad and continue to be mad as long as this nonsense continues.

We have to understand that we have taken enough from the kinds of actions that governments like yours and previous governments have done to divide and to deny communities like mine their rightful place in society. I tell you, my kids, who were born here, won't put up with as much as I have put with in this society.

By rescinding the Employment Equity Act and the Labour Relations Act, you have set the stage for Bill 103, because you thought people were not going to take any notice. You're just going to sit back and say: "Okay, we got by with this. We slipped this one through. Therefore, we're going to slip 103 through." Well, this time you got caught with your pants down, so to speak, because we're not going to let you get away with it.

This bill is a horrendous piece of legislation. I really think you thought that because you got away with those previous bills, this one was going to get through. Well, it's backfired on you big time. I've never seen so many people angry. I've never spoken to so many people who are as angry as I am about this bill.

I've written so much, I don't even know where to continue but I'll do my best to tell you some of the things I feel that have angered me. If we continue on this course of pushing for a megacity, we will see the expenses which this municipality has had to bear rise to such astronomical levels as to make them ungovernable. We'll become broke. We'll have to go hat in hand begging to the senior levels of government for moneys to carry out simple procedures like cleaning the streets, fixing potholes and so on, which are getting worse, by the way. This past winter I've never seen them so bad. But it obviously would mean that we're going to be in for some financial hardships the likes of which we have never seen before in Toronto.

Half the population of Toronto are tenants, and if you have to increase taxes, then the landlords will pass the costs of these increasing expenses on to the backs of already overtaxed tenants who are paying 50%, 60% and 70% of their income for shelter. Like I said before, only the rich will be able to afford to pay these exorbitant rents or afford to live downtown. When you combine that with the flight of homeowners to the 905 area and beyond, the city will resemble this ghost town, which I said earlier. I'm pretty sure that with that, you'll have an increase in the crime rate, because people will be seeing the well-to-do carrying on as usual and the poor suffering, and of course what happens is that your police budgets will increase and the consequent problems, which have visited US cities, will really catch us by the throat.

1620

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Mr Marcelline, we're nearing the end of your time. I wonder if you could wrap up.

**Mr Marcelline:** Okay. As I said, I have so much to say, but unfortunately, 10 minutes is not enough.

I ask you as members, think about what you're doing; think about what your government is doing. Has it been well thought out? I don't think so. Are you prepared to accept your role in the decline and destruction of a great metropolis? Are you prepared to carry on this lap-dog mentality whereby you allow our government to hoodwink you into thinking that what it's proposing for Toronto is a good thing? No, I hope not. I hope that when history is written, your names will not go down as the ones who helped to destroy this great municipality of ours.

You have hijacked the democratic process. Maggie Thatcher did it in England and she failed miserably. Wherever amalgamation has been tried, it has failed. London is a classic example, Indianapolis in the United States is another, Halifax — many other examples. It's failed. The costs have risen; services have gone down.

Now we see the Brits are waking up. They're going to kick out that bunch of jokers they have there called the Major government and bring back government of the people by the people for the people. Let's hope that in the next few years you have in government, three years or less, the same thing will happen, whereby you'll be kicked out of your office and we'll bring back a government that will serve the people and listen to the people and that will make democracy safe and available for all of us.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. I appreciate your coming forward today.

#### JOSEPH IZSAK

**The Chair:** Would Joseph Izsak please come forward. Good afternoon, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Joseph Izsak:** My name is Joseph Izsak. I'm a businessman. I'm a communication and design consultant and something of a Canadian nationalist. I wasn't born here, though. I was born in Budapest, Hungary.

One of my earliest memories is seeing my parents and a couple of cousins in the dining room of our apartment, and they were whispering to each other with nobody around. I overheard them making reference to "tyrants" and "thugs," and as a five-year-old I was curious about who they were talking about and what was going on. My mother was quite alarmed, and she explained to me that the word I was looking for was "patriots."

The overwhelming recollection I have of life in Hungary is an all-pervasive fear. There's a class picture with me in it where there's a picture of Stalin over the heads of the children, and my parents had so many nervous debates about whether they should cut off the picture of Stalin: Would it look bad to have the picture after he had been deposed, or would it be insulting to his memory to cut it off? What if someone recognized the room and knew the picture should have been there? It was a place where individuals didn't have any value and people had no influence unless they were members of the party.

Then we had the revolution and there were several months when I couldn't leave the apartment and I

couldn't look out the window because there was gunfire. I learned to recognize the sound of tanks — they don't have mufflers, so they're quite distinctive — and the cannons on the tanks and all these different explosions. We were lucky, because the closest a bullet came to one of our windows was hitting one of the bricks. I would look out and I could see the sky, and something hit a brick and chipped it.

After the uprising was over and it was clear that things wouldn't get better there — and I heard stories of people hanging from lampposts by ropes and I didn't really know what that meant. We went for a walk through the streets to the home of some relatives and I saw bombed-out buildings and rubble and everything. We never went home again. We took a long walk through a great deal of mud and ended up in Austria, and eventually ended up here.

It became clear to me that I was pretty fortunate, because I was living in what was very likely the best country in the world. You would think that after 40 years I'd begin to take that for granted, that this is just home, but day after day I could never shake the feeling of being so fortunate and so blessed to live in a place where people matter, where being a citizen has some meaning, where citizens have rights. It was really a wonderful thing and it seemed that even if I never got a mansion in Forest Hill, I was living in such a wonderful place and I could have a meaningful life.

Now I see a government that gets elected and says: "You voted for us. We can do whatever we want. The law says so. It doesn't matter what you think; it doesn't matter what you want. We think this city, which is generally considered the best city in the world to live in, is a terrible mistake to have. We have to get rid of it. It's all wrong. People who come here wanting to understand how Toronto became such a good place to live are presumably misguided. We don't care about them. We have to emulate the cities with a crumbling core, decaying infrastructure. The most wonderful thing we could do in Toronto is to privatize public services, because it's cheaper."

If a corporation makes a profit, then if people are employed on a non-profit basis working for themselves and their fellows — the logic of this escapes me.

Unlike a lot of the people who are against the amalgamation, I haven't seen any compelling evidence that this government is evil — there's circumstantial evidence — but I don't understand what they're doing. I don't think they're bad men, honestly, but I'm completely mystified.

What I'm going to address now is the pretext for making all these changes that are, in my view, certain to destroy this city and this province, or if not destroy it, harm it in very serious ways and dramatically degrade the quality of life for most Ontarians. The pretext is always the shortage of money. We live in a strange time. If future historians can reconstruct this period from whatever's left in a few hundred years, they are simply not going to believe what went on here. We have people who treat money as if it were a precious non-renewable resource.

What would you think of a post office that had huge numbers of people wanting to send letters and were not

able to because there was an artificial shortage of stamps? What would you say if Air Canada had a tremendous number of people wishing to fly and they had airplanes and trained pilots, but most of their airplanes were in storage and the ones that were flying were half empty because there was a shortage of tickets? People would discuss at great length how you can't create a successful airline by just printing tickets, that what we need to do is make wiser use of the tickets we have. Everyone knows this is idiotic. Tickets don't have intrinsic value. They're just a way of transferring value from one spot to another. They're bookkeeping.

Money isn't gold any more; money is bookkeeping. I've got about 70 books on economics at home. I've spent the last four years doing nothing but studying economics. Every morning I wake up and I pinch myself because I can't believe I'm living in a time when most people are content to believe that a government can run out of its own money.

Before I run out of time, what a responsible Ontario government would do is tell the federal government that it's played this game long enough. We had twice the debt in 1946, relative to the size of the economy, the gross domestic product, that we have now. At that time, we experienced unprecedented growth and paid off most of that debt painlessly by the early 1970s. At that time, the federal government decided that had been a terrible mistake and what we needed to do was return to the 1920s, and we have. It's a really crazy thing.

The fact is that the Ontario government, apart from having the option of putting pressure on the federal government and educating the population of Ontario, can create money the same way the private banks do. The government in Ottawa has privatized money creation, so private banks now create money that the government used to create at no cost, and then the government borrows from the private banks and pays them interest. What a wonderful system if you happen to own a bank.

I didn't choose my parents carefully enough, and unfortunately I got stuck with a family that doesn't own a bank. It's a damned good thing I'm not too materialistic.

We have our own bank here in the province of Ontario; it's the Province of Ontario Savings Office. If we started using that to create money for us the way other banks do, the private banks would go crazy. They would say: "You're going to kill us. How can you do that? This is Communism." Well, what do you expect them to say? They're earning record profits; they're happy. I think the rest of us deserve to be happy too.

The federal government used to create 10% of the new money every year; 90% came through the private banks. Now 100% comes from the private banks. Is it so much to ask that most Canadians could have 10% of the money created spent on them and let the private banks earn their damn profit on the remaining 90%?

Questions, comments, vegetables?

1630

**Mr Terence H. Young (Halton Centre):** You're actually the third speaker since we came back this afternoon to stir up fear with comparisons to American cities. I want to talk about the difference between Ameri-

can history and Canadian history, particularly with regard to urban planning. I know a little bit about urban planning as well; I studied it in university. I grew up in Toronto.

The American experience has been profoundly different, back to the American Civil War, when there was an exodus of people from the deep south, looking for opportunities for work and trying to exercise their freedom. They went to the north and because of the nature of society, couldn't find work, had no opportunities and have lived trapped in certain communities with little opportunities for work.

Federal government money in the United States given to cities has gone to build expressways outside the cities, instead of supporting infrastructure, transit systems in the cities or support services for people or institutions to maintain the inner core of the cities. That's been a major difference.

Banks actually redline certain neighbourhoods, refuse to give mortgages to people in certain neighbourhoods, so that if a young couple wanted to come in and renovate a house and rejuvenate the neighbourhood, they couldn't get a mortgage to do so.

Real estate developers practise a terrible practice called blockbusting, where they buy up one or two or three houses on a block, let the properties deteriorate and then buy up the rest of them for peanuts and put up a skyscraper. There was nothing to block that. They didn't have the wisdom to plan their cities. They're basically very badly planned cities.

Those are just some of the reasons. When I was studying urban politics in the 1970s, David Crombie — and he deserves a great deal of credit for this — brought in a height bylaw in Toronto and said, "You can't build a skyscraper unless you're building homes as well." They built communities in Toronto. There are certainly over 100 communities.

This bill will support the communities by establishing neighbourhood councils, because Toronto is a community of communities. It will be supporting neighbourhood councils. There is absolutely no valid comparison between our tradition and our city here in Toronto with the American experience.

A couple of ladies before, who live in a beautiful community in Etobicoke —

**The Chair:** Mr Young, I apologize for interrupting, but we're way past the 10 minutes allotted for this presentation. That's going to have to stand as a comment.

**Mr Izsak:** Could I respond briefly?

**The Chair:** No, we're beyond 11 minutes.

**Mr Izsak:** I think these comments are not relevant because I — come on. I'll just take a few seconds, okay?

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Mr Izsak. We don't have unanimous consent to extend your time. Thank you very much for coming forward.

DAVID BROWN

**The Chair:** Would David Brown please come forward? Hello, Mr Brown, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Brown:** Thank you very much. My name is David Brown. I'm a lawyer. I live in downtown Toronto. I've been a resident of this city for most of my life. I'm

not usually inclined to appear before committees like this but feel compelled to do so in direct opposition to the type of rhetoric which has been exemplified by the last two speakers. I've heard in the last 20 minutes that most of the evils of the modern world can be attributed to megalomania or amalgamation, namely racism, political tyranny and — a new one to me this afternoon — excessive bank profits.

I really would encourage the committee, and I'm sure you will, to take a deep breath and a big step back and consider what the real issue is. The real issue is the efficient and cost-effective delivery of municipal services in an environment which is unfortunately marked by constrained resources. We are, in this province, unfortunately not meeting the mortgage bill. We wouldn't allow our own households to be run this way and there's no reason we should expect the government of the day to conduct its affairs in any different manner.

In terms of what's gone on — and I don't want to belabour this because there are valid points in favour of amalgamation, which we'll get into. The silk-stocking socialists, represented by Layton and Sewell, are really propagating incredible myths. They're fearmongering, and over their Sunday morning mimosas are discussing political theory, when this government of the day has to get on with managing this province in an effective and responsible manner.

I can do no better in speaking in favour of amalgamation than to point to recent articles in the Toronto Star over the weekend. The Toronto Star, it's well known, is no fan of this government. They haven't gone out of their way to be particularly sympathetic to the political initiatives. The editorial on Saturday — I can do nothing more than repeat those points.

We are talking about bringing a political alignment in the Toronto area — that's all we're talking about — an amalgamation of six jurisdictions into the reality of the 21st century and allowing it to go forward. When these jurisdictions were drawn up, North York for the most part was a cow pasture. That's not the case any more.

These actions of this government are simply a reflection of that. Most of the services are already amalgamated, as you well know — and I'm not telling this committee anything new but I just felt compelled to make these points and get it off my chest — TTC, police, sewer treatment, garbage disposal.

Is there any cultural difference between Scarborough and East York, North York? These are not in and of themselves zones with any great differences or distinctions and I don't see that amalgamation will change that. It merely reflects the fact that these are artificial boundaries. If we can save some money in delivering services, then please let's get on with it. Let's get on with the process and stop the fearmongering.

Dealing with duplication, why is it that in Earl Bales Park the grass is cut by the city of North York and the hills are groomed by the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto? No legitimate reason why. I, in my own mind, cannot understand the distinction between a municipal councillor and a city councillor. These issues tend to be city-based issues and one governing body can deal with them effectively in a cost-efficient manner. All the

studies say there's a potential for savings. I've already alluded to the fact that we are not meeting the mortgage payments in this province. It's got to change, or else the great cultural events, the Caribanas, all these great, beautiful things that distinguish our city are in jeopardy if we cannot deal with this deficit.

There's an assumption that we can go on and do nothing and still enjoy this great city and the great services and events we have come to know and love. It's time that we deal with the fact that there simply is not enough money to go around so we can enjoy what we've got. I think this government is doing so, and these open public hearings are an example of that. This is not tyranny. They were elected by the people of this province. This is not something that's come out of the blue. They've always talked about delivering services more efficiently. This is one way of doing it, and this is something that's a natural offshoot of the policy papers that were put forth to the electorate before the election in 1995.

Those are my comments. Thank you for your time.

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** Thank you very much, Mr Brown, for your presentation and for your opinion. Although I don't agree, I respect that you have the right to voice your opinion in a democratic society.

You are a lawyer, you said earlier. You mentioned the word "compelling" twice and certainly you must have some compelling evidence that the government's model is going to be better. There's compelling evidence to the contrary. Can you maybe refer to some of the studies that you've done, that you've read, that indicate it will be better?

**Mr Brown:** Just approaching it from the most basic standpoint, why is it that East York, North York, Scarborough have their own planning departments? Why is it that all of that cannot be amalgamated into one planning department that will deal with these requests? Let's get rid of all of the bureaucracy that's involved, the duplication. That is fundamental, basic, a clear example of savings, amalgamating these various departments so that they're dealt with by one department. I'm no accountant, but I just cannot see how we wouldn't save resources in amalgamating services such as that.

The experts have been hired, the big consulting firms, and my understanding — I haven't read the reports in detail; I only go by what I see on the news and read in the press — is that money will be saved. That's what this government got elected on, delivering services more efficiently. "Efficiently" is a politically correct term for doing it at a cheaper price, freeing up resources so that we can deal with the deficit.

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**Mr Bartolucci:** The government refers to the KPMG study, and most experts have soundly disputed on very firm ground that their study was a good study. But there are experts that the government isn't listening to. Do you have any concerns that the government is not listening to the author of the Golden report, not listening to experts like Wendell Cox, Andrew Sancton, Jack Diamond? Are you concerned that this government refuses to listen to what they have to say and incorporate their ideas, because they truly are the experts in the field? Does that concern you at all?

**Mr Brown:** It would concern me if it was true, but these proceedings are an example of the fact that they're listening. Every one of those individuals has had an opportunity or could come and speak and in my view — I mean, I hope everybody's listening. We've been told that there will be changes to the legislation based upon these public hearings. I think implicit in your statement is that they're not listening, but these proceedings are, I think, the complete opposite or don't support that conclusion at all.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Brown, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### BLOOR BATHURST-MADISON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

**The Chair:** Would David Vallance please come forward. Good afternoon, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Vallance:** Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I think it's appropriate that the lawyer is for it because the legal bonanza this is going to create with the mess will be a boon to them for the next 10 years at least.

Before I start my presentation, which is written down, I'd like to preface it by saying that I'm chair of CORRA, the Confederation of Resident and Ratepayer Associations. I represent the Bloor Bathurst-Madison Business Improvement Area at that association. Last November I attended a meeting, as a result of my association with CORRA, with David Crombie, and before the meeting the question was asked: "Is everybody here opposed to amalgamation? Put your hands up."

All but three of us put our hands up. One fellow said he thought it was good for the city because it would save money. He has since done a 180 degree turn and he's now absolutely opposed to it. I said: I'm neither for nor against it, because we haven't got a plan. We've got no document, we've got no discussion paper here. We're just talking about an idea and I'm not for or against an idea until I have some substantial evidence for or against it. That's where I come from."

Since then, I've been involved in forming TAM, Taxpayers Against Megacity, which pretty well tells you where I'm coming from now.

This submission will focus on Bill 103. References to Bills 104, 105 to 150, or however many the Harris government plans to pass to create chaos in this province, will be only in passing.

Bill 103 appears to have been conceived in the back of an empty TTC bus — and there are lots of them around — in a fit of passion, for all the planning that has gone into it. According to someone who has a fairly senior position at municipal affairs, this was not even a twinkle in the minister's eye before October 15, 1996. Others have spoken to this fact better than I can, but like all conceptions, the result can be painful, will be expensive and will likely require lifelong support payments.

The question now is whether to abort what is by all examinations a badly deformed and probably severely retarded offspring. The decision is less agonizing than for a real child because the critter is not a living, breathing human being, but nonetheless, for those of us who care

about cities, it will be the death of the parent cities and it is highly unlikely the father will provide much support. Forgive me for the analogy. My concern is for a badly conceived idea.

Differences between cities come about for many reasons and built form is one of them. For most of you, the term "built form" has little meaning, except for the planner over here. What I'm referring to is the density within each of the municipalities, which largely determines the lifestyle of the residents.

The cities of Toronto, York and East York are very similar in their residential densities. The differences occur in the amount of commercial and industrial buildings in each. Much of the C and I has been lost in York and East York, for a host of reasons, not the least of which is the high tax burden imposed on Metro by a provincial government that has since time immemorial used Metro cities to subsidize the rest of the province from their property taxes. Several reports in the last few years have established that, but all three major political parties have ignored them. The studies are referred to there. Other presenters have referred to this problem, but there is no discussion in the daily papers because the commitment to intensify, even to the minimum suggested by the Blais report, just isn't there.

The questioner over here talked about American cities. I'm going to talk about Montreal, which almost everybody will agree is in serious trouble right now. I had a conversation with a senior economic development officer in Montreal nearly two years ago. He said that Montreal's problems were only slightly the result of the separation factor. The main causes of Montreal's economic decline were more provincial policies that treated the city of Montreal as a cash cow. This policy left nothing for the renewal of infrastructure that is essential for an aging city. The second problem for Montreal, according to this official, is that all of Quebec's poor people have been housed in Montreal, for the same reason; obviously not all but a very large proportion. The attached article from the Globe will outline the details.

What has all this got to do with Bill 103? Careful study of the financial details of York and East York will show that as cities they are actually more efficient than Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough. The high taxes of York are really the result of provincial policies that have forced the municipalities of Metro to finance things from property taxes that other cities of similar size in the rest of the province don't have to finance. This flies in the face of all logic because the household income of the residents in the cities of Metro are among the lowest in the GTA.

It is no coincidence that the city of Toronto is actually the worst spender of the cities in Metro: It is the largest. It was able to get away with it for so long because of a growing economy and a constantly expanding tax base. It was also possible because Toronto extracts high taxes from small properties while the outer cities extract relatively small taxes from large properties.

Although the tax base is growing again, most of it is in the form of residential development. In a report in the newspapers during the Sheppard subway debate, the chief financial officer for Metro pointed out that residential

property does not cover its own costs from its property taxes, let alone provide extra to finance additional services like welfare, homes for seniors, subsidized housing or subways.

When the Minister of Municipal Affairs announced Bill 103, he said it doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that you can save money by having one big city. He also said it has been studied to death. He was right on both counts. No rocket scientist, let alone anyone of average intelligence, would come to the conclusion that you can save money with one big city, and all of the studies conclude that it would be death to have one big city.

The minister himself can apparently find nothing to support his proposal. A quote from the Globe of February 12, 1997: "His," Mr Leach's, "speech was full of the same explanations and pat answers that he has given since he announced that Toronto, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, East York, York and Metro Toronto would be melded into a megacity."

The ball is in the government's court. It can plunge ahead in the face of all logic and common sense or it can have the minister resign, aborting Bill 103 with him, and get someone to examine the whole picture and try to make some real sense from it.

If the Harris government insists on proceeding, then it should also pass the following act, which was found on the back of an envelope in the secretary's wastebasket in the minister's office, written apparently as a press release:

"Bill 142, The Newspaper of Toronto Act, 1997. Government plans to amalgamate Toronto's daily newspapers." Bill Saunderson announces the "birth of a mega-paper. The new paper will be born on January 1, 1998, and will bring together the Globe, the Sun and the Star, in descending order of relevance, into one system of news delivery, called The Daily Universe.

"The goal is to create a competitive, efficient newspaper that will eliminate confusion about who does what and where there's one cost-conscious and accountable editorial board.

"It's also about economic efficiency and creating an image that projects a uniform theme so the paper can thrive. Assuming all the editors and reporters fall into place with intelligence, this is a reasonable proposal," announced Mr Saunderson. 'By getting rid of three unnecessary editors, replacing them with a mega-editor with mega-pay and three associate idiots (sic) at the same salary and streamlining the Queen's Park, Metro, national and international news bureaus, the hypothetical savings could...run to possibly nearly millions of dollars,' as demonstrated in a report from KPMG done on the morning of December 23, 1996, by reviewing the editorial pages of the three papers.

"The overlap of editorial content where one newspaper supports one political party and another supports a different one is a ridiculous waste of money. We propose a uniparty policy that will lead to the elimination of multiparty politics in the province and ultimately the most efficient of all governments, a dictatorship." That was crossed out and replaced by "an all-knowing, benevolent Premier."

"We have no detailed plans on how to do this amalgamation, but like everything else we are doing, we'll make it up as we go along."

As one small business owner said when I asked about Bill 103, "If we can't have much impact on a council of 16, what chance do we have with one of 44?"

I refer you to the plan from Mr Leach on page 4.

1650

**The Chair:** Excuse me, is that it?

**Mr Vallance:** Yes, I'm finished.

**The Chair:** Mr Marchese, you have about a minute and a half.

**Mr Marchese:** I have two questions but the one that comes to mind very quickly is, Mr Leach's response to questions in the House and the way he continues to respond to them is to say: "This bill is going to save money. It will get rid of politicians. It will eliminate duplication. It will get rid of a bloated bureaucracy." He continues to say that all the time.

My worry is that, although he sat here one day to listen to a few people, he's not listening to people like yourself who I think have a great deal to say, with a great deal of knowledge; you and many others with a great deal of expertise in this area. I'm afraid he's disregarding what you and 350 or more other people have said before. What do you say to that?

**Mr Vallance:** I was interviewed on CBC Newsworld back in December and at that time I expressed two things. One was my concern for the democratic process, of which there was none at that time and there hasn't really been a lot since, and the second thing was my concern about the minister, from all reports, being very stubborn, dogmatic and unwilling to listen to reason once he's made up his mind. If I were the people sitting on this side of the room, I would be very concerned about that because the long-term cost to the government is going to be very high for this. I'm sure of it.

**Mr Marchese:** The minister relies on gut feeling and what he calls common sense, and the lawyer before you said: "It's common sense there are going to be savings. You make six bureaucracies into one and you've got savings." Do you rely on that kind of gut feeling for the comments you're making or do you look at other research before you come to your conclusion?

**Mr Vallance:** I think the question was asked of the lawyer and he returned the same rhetoric that Mr Leach has returned, and that's all they've got. They don't have a single study that backs up their proposal and that's really the concern that everybody who talks against it is saying. I don't know what's wrong with the back-benchers. Can't they read?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Vallance, for your presentation.

#### DOUG LOWRY

**The Chair:** Would Doug Lowry please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Lowry. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Doug Lowry:** Hello. My name is Doug Lowry. I live on Palmerston Boulevard in the city of Toronto and I work for one of the banks down at King and Bay. I belong to my neighbourhood residents association, PARA. I belong to the PC Party both provincially and federally. I belong to the 14 division community liaison association, and I'd like to see Rosario Marchese defeated next time.

**Mr Marchese:** I understand.

**Mr Lowry:** You're my MPP.

When the bill on amalgamation was introduced at Queen's Park in December, I reflected on what I liked and didn't like about the concept of the legislation, and on December 30, I wrote to the Minister of Municipal Affairs about some of the things we as a neighbourhood association had done, including traffic calming, which was something that was relatively new. It took us about five years to get this thing through in a city where, more or less, people have the same common interest. So I thought, what happens? How long is it going to take 44 people when it's a very new issue? It's going to take much longer, because the minister has said at public meetings the laws passed would necessarily be generic laws for all the city, which is the reason why some of the members from northern Ontario complain about bills which happen in southern Ontario. The same thing is going to happen in Metro with one big city.

This also applies to park facilities. I go swimming at a community pool, Bickford Park, every Saturday. It's free. The outdoor pool is free during the summer because in the city of Toronto the politicians and we the citizens have said that recreation facilities should be free. When they made their cuts, and they made an awful lot of cuts around their budget, they kept recreational facilities as close as possible with few service charges. I don't think the larger city would make that choice.

Bill 103 is about the structure of the new city; however, the ability to finance the administration was introduced in January. The province had a wonderful ability at that time to seriously consider the future of municipalities, to look at what they should do and not do to clear inequities and to present its case to the people of the province. I don't think they've done that. I think they've failed miserably.

The overriding concern seems to be to cut taxes, but without asking what we really want as a city, because presumably we would elect people who would provide the kind of services we want. If we wanted gold-plated service, we would get gold-plated and pay for it. If we don't, we'd get fewer services. Presumably we'd elect councillors of that nature. That's the way the game used to be. Presumably if the council would seriously consider annexation or merger or amalgamation with neighbouring municipalities if they couldn't afford it, the citizens would vote and the deed would be done, or we would just replace the councillors to get what we wanted as citizens. The area with better services in the amalgamation would benefit. The area with the worst services would get their services but they would have to pay a little bit more.

In the amalgamated city what do we get? The famous KPMG report suggests that, over three years, the savings are going to be between \$565 million and \$865 million, which is a difference of \$300 million. That's okay, but then Metro Toronto says the new financing structure is going to cost it \$400 million. So I have no savings. There are going to be no savings and taxes are going up, so what is the benefit, especially when you look around at York East?

There's an MPP here from York East. His community is not merging. Richmond Hill has a city hall. Richmond Hill has a regional government and somehow they're not amalgamating. Metro has to be. What happened to the great "less duplication"? Somehow we missed it. I don't know.

What else do we lose? We lose an ability to make good, bad and indifferent decisions at the local level. We lose because the new financial structure imposed automatically causes our taxes to go up — in Metro, I'm talking about. So if there was any money to be saved on amalgamation, then it's lost with the new funding that's in place by the provincial government.

Rationalization and restructuring and amalgamation is not something new. It's done lots of times in all of the provinces but — I am a small shareholder. I own stocks on the Toronto Stock Exchange. A small company, Fletcher Challenge, wanted to reorganize their company. They sent me this. The Bank of BC has no assets; they merged with Canadian Western Bank. I got a report.

So the announcement comes out. I phoned the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, I phoned Management Board. I said: "Gee, I'd like to read some of the reports that suggest all these wonderful savings. As a Tory, I have to support this stuff." I didn't get anything. I finally went through the Premier's office and city hall and got the KPMG report.

On Sunday I was watching Rogers community cable TV. The minister was on and he mentioned there was a \$100-million saving in amalgamating Toronto Hydro, York Hydro, Scarborough Hydro, which is nice. I had called Toronto Hydro because I thought, "We're going to save some money on hydro rates." No, there is no report. They said they didn't know anything about the savings. I called the mayor's office. Surely if there's \$100 million to be saved in hydro, the mayors would know about it. Didn't know about it; nobody had seen the report. I called Ontario Hydro because I thought that's what it said; I didn't go back to Rogers. They went through the information bureau; no report. So I'm not sure where this report is.

The lack of financial information, with all due respect to the KPMG report, which itself says savings are "possible" — the time frame in which they did it was very short. In their announcements they made those kinds of statements that it depends on the management of the resources and there's only a range of possible savings. Either the supporting documentation does not exist — the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, when I went through urban planning, produced a wealth of information, management studies. That's what Municipal Affairs did; that's about all they did. They produced lengthy, detailed reports. They probably do not have an optimistic reflection of the KPMG report.

So I find it strange, with the ability in this city, when you have Lotus computers, you can do worksheets, you have three major universities in the proposed megacity, two of them producing MBA programs, when the graduating class of the chartered accountants brings out government minister Marilyn Mushinski, when the city of Toronto is the financial capital of Canada, the provincial government does not produce financial reports to substantiate its claims. Surely, you've got to believe the citizens are not interested in how much taxes are saved but where they can be saved and how the provincial government believes they can be saved and where opportunities lie for non-government companies to take advantage of areas where they will have to cut back.

For a large number of reasons, I anticipate a no vote. Apparently the Minister of Municipal Affairs does too, which indicates a whole bunch of things to me, including the government did not get its message out or got a bad one out. I remember going to a number of provincial PC fund-raisers, and on one of those occasions a member of this committee told the gathering: "During our first year the ministers were very well prepared. They were extremely well prepared. They knew their issues. They knew what were going to be the types of questions to be asked. They prepared for all that. They came out with flying colours." Everybody looked at them and said, "Gee, you guys really know what you're doing," and that was absolutely wonderful and as a Tory I was damned proud of them.

However, I went to amalgamation meetings in mid-January and I looked at some other Tory supporters and said, "God, it's going to be really tough to be a Tory in Toronto." One of the reasons I'm here is because on this issue the government has been lousy, to be kind.

So what happens with a no vote? Because it's much easier to vote against the megacity than to be in favour of the provincial government. Basically the province says: "Trust us, it's going to be fine. We'll do the right thing in an effort to lower your taxes." But if I really wanted lower taxes, I'd just go north of Steeles and have a 905 phone number because I know, under the existing financial structure and the existing structures, I get close local government and I get cheaper taxes; almost a reason to move.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mr Lowry, I must ask you to bring your comments to a close. We're running out of time.

**Mr Lowry:** I think the province did a really great thing when it removed education from property taxes. I think you should remove a whole lot more. It should only be, when you go to look to buy a house, those things that you look for and those are the things that you should be paying for in property tax.

I think that now we have referendums, I'd like to keep a tight fiscal framework and have a provision by taking away social services off them that they could not raise —

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for presenting here this evening. We've run out of time.

I'd like to call on Robert Wilson. Is Mr Robert Wilson here? Is Christopher Wilson here? James Binnie? I'll declare a five-minute recess then.

*The committee recessed from 1703 to 1707.*

#### COMMUNIST PARTY OF CANADA (MARXIST-LENINIST)

**The Vice-Chair:** We're going to resume. We have Anna DiCarlo with us from the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist). Welcome to the committee, Ms DiCarlo.

**Ms Anna DiCarlo:** Bill 103 is part of a province-wide program of municipal amalgamation. As you know, it's part of the Common Sense Revolution's promise to dismantle so-called big government. Notwithstanding the fact that Bill 103 is actually going to create a bigger rather than smaller government, the argument that's being presented to us is that the several existing smaller city councils plus the higher-tier Metro Toronto council constitute a form of government which is inefficient, uneconomical, bureaucratic and full of so-called red tape. Savings are being promised to us.

The government has also stated it wants to privatize various government programs and services. In this regard, the special cabinet committee on privatization, headed by Finance Minister Ernie Eves, was formed and Bill 26 and Bill 103 have followed. Municipal amalgamation is creating economies of scale for the anxiously awaiting corporations and financiers. Already, purchase agreements have been negotiated, as in the case of the acquisition of ambulance services in several central Ontario cities by one American corporation. All the legal obstacles in the way of privatization are being removed before our very eyes.

The division which has been created in this province, especially in Metro Toronto, between the government and the people over the megacity and the downloading of services, has a very surreal aspect to it. On the one hand, we have the government promising that it is going to provide us with savings, promising to reduce taxes and even promising to get rid of bureaucracy, one of the things everybody hates, but the people are screaming no.

The problem we have here is that people can see what is going on before their very eyes. The privatization of water in England, for example, has not yielded any savings whatsoever for the people. Far from it; prices have gone up, quality of services has gone down and the people have lost even the remotest level of control over their national resource of water. The exploitation of workers in the sectors which have been privatized has increased.

It is a very peculiar definition of savings which is being presented to us. It is one which results in the people paying more for the things that they worked and paid to create in the first place, especially when they not only have to continue to pay the same level of taxes but are also paying new user fees.

People are also seeing the results of these so-called savings in their own lives, when they pay extra fees in hospitals, if they can afford it, and when they pay extra fees for the children to participate in school activities. They have seen the result of these so-called savings from welfare cuts in the increased numbers of pauperized and destitute people in the streets.

The other problem is that before we can speak about savings we need to speak about what needs to be purchased. If we use the example of a family, the notion of savings is that first the family sets out what is required and then it figures out how to economize. It begins from the needs of all its members, for housing, food, clothing, general wellbeing, culture and entertainment, security in the future and so on. Once the needs are budgeted and the amount is calculated, then the family can proceed to

discuss how to save money. It could hardly be classified as savings if the parents stopped providing meals at home and forced their children to find the money to eat out, but this is precisely the kind of logic that government restructuring and so-called savings are being presented with in Ontario.

Recently, Minister of Municipal Affairs Leach stated in justification of Bill 103 that the form of municipal government which we now have is not appropriate for a modern society. I would agree with him on this. He told reporters, "Most of the communities that we see...were set up in the 1850s and it" — the existing municipal governments — "was appropriate for the 1850s. It's not appropriate for the 1990s or going into the 21st century."

What was needed in the 19th century really is no different in essence than what is needed today. People, then and now, need the mechanisms to exercise control over their lives and over their societies, more so today when we live in a world where corporations with unprecedented powers are attempting to eliminate every single thing that stands in the way of their profit-making.

Of course, there are many things that are different. What is different from the 1850s? To determine what we need today, we have to start from the concrete reality. In the 19th century the constituency which was represented by local government was comprised of propertied men. They chose their selectmen, as they were called at that time, to deal with matters such as roads, sanitation, crime and so on, and all of their activities were overseen by the Governor General, who was appointed by the British crown.

Authority over local government was later passed on to the provincial governments in the British North America Act, and while municipal governments have come to greatly expand their responsibilities, this non-recognition of the right to self-government remains the case to this day. That is why we can have such a phenomenon as a government coming along and simply dismantling the local governments that exist. The fact is that local government has never been recognized as a right in Canada, and this is certainly one of the anachronisms that belongs to the 1850s, to the period of British colonial rule and not to a modern Canada.

Secondly, from the 1850s to this time the constituency of local government has dramatically changed. While municipal electoral laws were the last to have property qualifications removed, today every citizen of a certain age is eligible to elect and to be elected. The remains of this notion of political rights which are qualified by the economic status of the citizen, however, is still seen in the electoral process, where any serious contender must have either their own financial resources or second-party financial backing.

This will become even worse if Bill 103 is implemented, as the most powerful economic forces will throw all their resources behind their candidates to ensure that they are among the powerful cabinet of 44 representatives who will govern the city. This is also an anachronism which belongs to the past and which should be replaced with laws that provide public funding for candidates.

Furthermore, as compared to the 19th century, today we have an extremely diversified society. It is comprised

of peoples from many different national origins and many different collective interests, whether we speak of the industrial working class, or workers from different sectors, or women, or youth and students and professionals in various fields. All the collectives in the society have a right to participate in governing their own local affairs. The mechanisms and the provincial legislation pertaining to local government, however, still remain connected to this notion of serving property owners, a notion which belongs to the 18th and 19th centuries.

As we approach the 21st century, what kind of local governments do we need? If reform is to be brought about, we would recommend the following: first is withdrawal of Bill 103 in its entirety; second is amendment of the Canadian Constitution to recognize the right to local self-government; third is the enactment of legislation for the creation of people's councils; fourth is the enactment of legislation which would place all locally based social programs and services under the direct jurisdiction of people's councils.

These measures, in our opinion, would go a long way towards people producing savings and eliminating waste and duplication in government as well as providing themselves with the services they actually need and require and without which they can't function in this society. They would fulfil the great demand of the people to exercise control over their own lives and over the affairs of their society. They would bring local government into the 21st century and liberate it from the 19th century notions which belong to a period of empire-building. Thank you very much.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms DiCarlo. Mr Flaherty will have just about a minute.

**Mr Jim Flaherty (Durham Centre):** A whole minute. Thank you for your presentation. I'm interested in what you said about constitutional reform and I gather creating, in effect, constitutional city states in Canada is the idea of a constitutional amendment.

I'm also interested in the misconception that seems prevalent — I've heard it in this committee and I've heard it in the other committee, on Bill 104, with the education bill — that we have a hierarchical constitutional system in this country, which we do not have. We have a federation with a separation of powers, equal governments, federal and provincial, with a division of powers. The division of powers that the provincial government enjoys includes property and civil rights, which is why municipalities are creatures of the province. I think it's important for people to understand the basic constitutional nature of the Canadian democracy.

More importantly, I think your proposal of what I would call city states as constitutional entities in this country would freeze the urban situation in this country as it is now. If we look at the last two generations of Canadian history, I'm sure you would agree with me that would be inappropriate. Even if you look at the history of southern Ontario, it would be inappropriate, because it would put us in a situation where we, the constitutional governments of Canada, the federal and provincial governments, would not be able to change boundaries, so that the town of Forest Hill would be forever the town of Forest Hill.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mr Flaherty, I must interrupt here. We've gone past time.

Thank you very much for coming here today.

1720

### CHRISTOPHER WILSON

**The Vice-Chair:** Christopher Wilson, would you come forward, please. Good afternoon, Mr Wilson, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Christopher Wilson:** Thank you very much. I'm a long-time resident of Toronto, at least the last 30 years, and I am a development professional.

I intend to speak to you today from a pragmatic point of view. I appreciate that there has been much outflowing of feeling here and a certain amount of expression of political principle, but I'm going to come at this a different way. I'm going to appeal to your pragmatism, because I think there are many pragmatic members of this government. It's a pity the minister isn't here today. I've had experience dealing with him. I know him to be a pragmatic person.

The basic criterion for a pragmatic person is whether something makes sense. I want to suggest to you, when looked at from a commonsense point of view, one that I know you hold dear, I and others like me certainly see some practical problems with this legislation and with the broader concept behind it.

First of all, dealing with the structure of amalgamation, I just want to make a couple of points here. The idea that creating a bigger level of government, subsuming the local governments of Toronto into a government the equivalent of or bigger than Metro, will realize efficiencies runs against the practical experience of many of us who have had to do work here in the city. I only have to look back and compare my experiences of trying to get approvals, trying to deal with development issues with local governments versus having to deal with the Metro level of government or the province, to tell you that there's an enormous difference. If I run into a practical problem at a local level, I can phone up the bureaucrat involved and get the matter settled within a matter of hours, certainly not more than days, usually. The experience dealing with Metro, and this isn't impugning anybody's commitment, is that things take a lot longer and the situation is much more inflexible.

I don't think people with practical experience doing business here would accept readily the argument that creating a larger level of government will be more efficient. It also runs against pragmatic, commonsense thinking to think that creating that level of government will make things more efficient. I've often heard the reference to amalgamating the planning departments into one department, but I've also heard talk about running the planning departments out of the former city halls. What that tells me is that we're much more likely to wind up with an additional layer of bureaucracy rather than removing bureaucracy, because if we eliminate six planning commissioners, my strong guess is that we'll end up with six new deputy planning commissioners and the savings won't have been very great at all. From a

business point of view, the risk here is that it will become much more difficult to do business in the city.

Looking beyond the structure, I think we have to be concerned about the overall content of this plan. Here I'm going to go beyond the matters of this bill. I realize that's the focus of your attention, but the government has presented this as part of an overall plan, and from a business point of view you have to look at the business plan, you have to look at the big picture of what's being proposed. From that point of view, practical concerns arise too.

My greatest practical concerns have to do with the financial health of the new megacity with the transfer of massive responsibilities from the provincial government. It seems clear to me, and I know many people like me have raised these concerns, that these responsibilities are beyond what is within the scope of municipal governments to logically, reasonably handle. When you're talking about large-scale welfare costs, long-term care and housing, these are burdens that are very difficult to handle on the property tax base. The point has often been made that property taxes are a rather rigid form of taxation, and these costs are quite volatile.

Since my experience is strongly in the housing field, I thought I would bring to you today some recent research that has been completed by a coalition of housing providers called Homefront Ontario, which commissioned an independent study of what the costs would be for the transfer of housing to the megacity. They came up with some rather disturbing conclusions.

Some of you at least will have in front of you perhaps all the spreadsheets they did, which are just a summary. The simple facts that emerged were that the older housing stock is quite deteriorated. It's no secret that public housing has been sorely neglected and repair of public housing has been neglected. I think, frankly, all parties bear responsibility for this, because it has crossed many different regimes. Some may quarrel, but the fact of the matter is that it's not in good shape. That's confirmed by studies done by KPMG for Metro housing.

We've worked to put together figures for the province as a whole based on known studies and come up with over \$1 billion in remedial repairs that are required. This has to be seen as a very conservative estimate of the cost. It's based on existing studies. Most of the studies are not thoroughgoing engineering studies. It also, as well as covering the cost of urgent repairs, covers the cost of topping up replacement reserves for the newer social housing stock. This is a very prudent practice, followed by all condominiums, of putting money aside for the future. It was discontinued by the last government, most unwisely, and now the piper has to be paid.

When you look at this on an annual basis, this means something in the order of \$218 million in additional costs, of which about \$81 million is a Metro cost. This adds on to the \$365 million or so that's already been estimated, to come up with quite a disturbing bill that's somehow going to have to be covered. Even if it's amortized, even if there is refinancing, even if there is every scheme in the world, the fact of the matter is that bills have to be paid. The alternative is to allow housing stock to grossly deteriorate and you wind up with slums;

the centre of the city and pockets of the suburbs will decay seriously. The things that have made this city quite attractive — freedom from crime, freedom from a large number of people on the streets — will go out the window.

The fact of the matter is that we're placing this new megacity in the unenviable position of having to choose between the fiscal health of the municipality and the social health of the city, the quality of life of the city. If you jack up property taxes to balance the books, you risk driving people out of the centre of the city, you risk the kind of deterioration we've seen in American cities. If you choose the other way and allow the social housing to deteriorate and cut welfare and so forth — which I recognize may be, at first blush, attractive to members of this government, but I would suggest that if you take a broader and pragmatic view, the fact that we've had these programs and these programs are in place is part of what makes this city generally a more decent and safer place for people to live and do business.

I'd suggest to you that the implications of these decisions have not been well contemplated. It's very attractive. I know the government has a strong commitment to reducing the deficit, which many people in this room, including myself, share. But we have to look carefully at the ways we try to do it. Shifting these kinds of volatile costs on to municipalities, from a pragmatic, business point of view, does not recommend itself. We risk killing the goose that laid the golden egg. We risk creating social hardship and social unrest.

I suggest to you the government needs to revisit this package and look at a structure, look at the kinds of efficiencies, the maximum efficiencies, that can be acquired structurally by achieving a municipality, say, 700,000 to one million in size, which we know from studies has proved to be the most efficient financially. We need to look carefully at the kinds of costs that are being downloaded and back off this formula which risks the future and safety of our city.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Wilson. Mr Cleary, we have less than one minute. One quick question.

**Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall):** I'd like to thank you for your presentation, Mr Wilson. Your presentation reminds me and those who were in municipal government in the early 1970s of when regional government was coming in. A number of the municipalities that were involved in that were bringing up the same issues you were.

Since I have only one question, less than a minute, do you see any benefits at all in Bill 103?

**Mr Wilson:** As others have said, I think the government has certainly taken the initiative to tackle a hard task that needs doing, but frankly I think the wrong question has been answered. The problem that needs to be addressed is coordination across the GTA and preventing the hole-in-the-doughnut phenomenon with the city itself. I don't think Bill 103 really gets to the heart of that issue at all, and it risks undoing something that in fact is working quite well.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Wilson, for coming here this afternoon.

1730

## OLGA KREMKO

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Olga Kremko. Good afternoon, Ms Kremko, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Ms Olga Kremko:** Members of the committee on general government, my name is Olga Kremko. My parents came from eastern Europe in the time between the first and second world wars. Although I grew up in poverty in Toronto, my parents emphasized how fortunate we were to be living in a democracy and that we would never be hungry.

Later, after the Second World War, when my father opened his own business with the generous help of his employer, we moved to North York. My husband and I brought up our family in North York. The last home we owned was at Bayview and Cummer. My husband went to university and Osgoode Hall with Premier Bill Davis and had been a member of the Progressive Conservative Party for a time. My father, my husband and I helped in a couple of elections. In 1984, I separated and moved back to Toronto to finish my master's program at U of T.

I am opposed to the process and contents of Bill 103 and to the downloading. The amalgamation of the seven municipalities is part and parcel of the provincial government's overall restructuring of the delivery of services, the downloading of hard and soft services.

Bill 103 is not democratic. The amalgamation of Toronto with 12 communities that surrounded Toronto was initiated by Mayor Allan Lamport of Toronto through the Ontario Municipal Board in 1950. The provincial government took 17 years to do the above amalgamation, establish a two-tier government and then further amalgamate the municipalities into the five cities and one borough that we have now. The provincial government did much more careful studies and was more willing to compromise than this government is. This is from the *Globe and Mail*, February 17, 1997.

With Bill 103, none of the mayors had asked for the amalgamation. In other words, the amalgamation as well as the downloading is being forced on the municipalities of Metro Toronto. With such sweeping legislation, a white paper usually is produced to explain in detail the government's proposal.

Why is this government treating the 905 areas differently and letting them decide how they are going to amalgamate? They were given another two to 10 years, negotiators and facilitators.

Indeed, the real problems are these and other inequalities between the 905 and 416 areas in the greater Toronto area. Taxes are 40% less in the 905 areas because they are given more subsidies in education, health and ambulance. The 905 area does not have the big welfare rolls, subsidized housing or the TTC system to operate. Metro Toronto is where people from all across Canada come to find work and then often find themselves on welfare and subsidized housing when they can't find work, especially during a recession.

Both the Crombie and the Golden studies have emphasized that the greater Toronto area have a cohesive

network concerning transportation and a more level playing field in the economy before anything is done within the Metro area.

The bill creates new levels of bureaucracy by giving extraordinary powers to the board of trustees and the transition team that are above the law. The decisions of the two bureaucracies will be final and cannot be reviewed or questioned by the court. This is sections 12 and 18.

The Statutory Powers Procedure Act does not apply to the boards nor to the transition team. They can make decisions in secret. The board and the transition team are protected from personal liability: sections 15 and 21. Their decisions are also exempt from the various freedom of information and protection of privacy acts and any other acts which Bill 103 is in conflict with. This is in sections 13 and 19.

The powers of the board of trustees over each of the six municipal governments and Metro were retroactive to December 1996: section 30. Yesterday, Mr Justice Lloyd Brennan of the Ontario Court of Justice ruled that these powers are not legal until Bill 103 becomes law since the legislation will allow the trustees to override the authority of the municipal councils.

The 1997 expenses of the board of trustees and those of the transition team are to be paid by the municipality of Metro Toronto and the 1998 expenses are to be paid by the new city — sections 14 and 20 — grossly unfair because it is not the cities and the borough of Metro Toronto that want this amalgamation.

The trustees and the transition team gain complete control over every aspect of our elected councils and decision-making: sections 9 and 16.

The board of trustees does not report to a democratically elected city council, but to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Al Leach. That is in sections 6 and 9. Since these regulations do not have to be approved by the cabinet, Mr Al Leach's power is autocratic. Mr Leach has the power to make any other orders he thinks are necessary; for example, the trustees were not permitted to speak to the press.

A council of 45 members from 44 wards will be elected for the new city. It will decide if there are to be restrictions imposed on the amounts to be raised and spent in any year and make recommendations to the minister. The new council will probably cut discretionary spending powers by 15%, as in the amalgamation scheme of Kingston. This means cuts to services. This could only be achieved by a board with dictatorial powers that is not responsible to the public.

The team can sign contracts with whomever it wants and on whatever terms it wants. The new council cannot challenge these contracts because they will be done in secret. The transition team can privatize any service it wants. Since the transition team has no obligation to do its business in public, no one will know what contracts it will give to whom.

Also, there is no clause in Bill 103 that specifically says what happens to the reserve fund. The main objective of Bill 103 is to get public control over the services provided in our city and possibly to take over municipal finances.

As a tenant living in the Annex, my rent will go up for several reasons. The amalgamation, the downloading of social services and hard services and the market value assessment will result in higher property taxes under Bill 96. Under Bill 96, any rise in property tax will be considered an extraordinary operating expense and will not be subject to any limits. Since I am on a widow's pension and the Canada pension plan, my rent could very easily increase to 75% or 85% of my income.

Also in the experience of amalgamated cities is an increased influence by special interest groups, professional lobby organizations. The larger governments are more susceptible to special interests. This is for three reasons: First, special interests have the financial resources to hire professional advocates such as lobbyists to learn, understand and manipulate the rigid process of larger governments. Conversely, individual citizens and neighbourhood groups rarely have financial resources to hire professional advocates. Second, there are economies of scale with respect to political advocacy. It is simpler and less expensive for special interests to influence a larger government than multiple smaller governments.

**The Vice-Chair:** Ms Kremko, I must tell you that you're running out of time. Could you give us your final statement, please.

**Ms Kremko:** What I would like to say is that this government is no longer progressive because most of the legislation that you have put forth and the acts that you have done have been regressive. The Conservative Party does not do things as quickly as you have done them. They take time to do it and they make sure that everything is fine and they like to reach a consensus.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing here this evening. I'd like to call on Robert Wilson. Mr Wilson? Okay, is Mr Binnie here? Bruce Kidd?

1740

#### BRUCE KIDD

**The Vice-Chair:** Good evening, Mr Kidd, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mr Bruce Kidd:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members of the committee. I'm grateful for this opportunity to present my views to you. As you've heard, my name is Bruce Kidd. I've lived in the Metro area for more than 50 years and I'm an employee of the University of Toronto.

I'm here to oppose Bill 103. I urge you to withdraw it and to rethink it to get it right. I'm not opposed to reorganization of the Metropolitan community, but I don't think this bill is the way to do that. My reasons for my opposition to the bill in its current form are as follows.

It is not coordinated with a plan for the overall governance and administration of the entire GTA as recommended by the Golden and Crombie commissions, and it seems to me, as they have argued, that should be the first priority.

Coupled with the proposed downloading of welfare, Bill 103 will cripple the new municipality, jeopardizing a number of important essential services, including housing for low-income people, long-term care for the elderly, child care, public health services, programs to

prevent violence, employment equity programs, and public education for the diverse needs of our community. I fear that in its current form, Bill 103 will set in force changes that will disadvantage those most vulnerable in our community.

There is no provision in Bill 103 for ensuring that the level of services offered by the new megacity continues and generalizes the best practice of the six existing municipalities, many of which are highly innovative and as a result are highly valued by their citizens. My fear is that the new common standard will be at the lower end of service. I regret that there has not been a fuller discussion of the level of service to be established by this bill. I think it would be much more attractive if everyone in the proposed new municipality knew that it was best practice that would characterize the municipality.

The sections in the bill dealing with the trustees which completely unnecessarily freeze the democratic process are also objectionable. There is no evidence that the promised administrative savings will ever result.

What particularly upsets me about Bill 103 is the hostility it exhibits towards the institution of government, especially local government. I know it's not fashionable to defend government these days, but as a historian, government has been very important to the growth of Canada in economic terms, in terms of social and cultural development. In fact I think it's one of our defining characteristics set out in the British North America Act of 1867 and enshrined in the Constitution Act that unlike the Americans, who sought to achieve life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, we chose to create a society of peace, order and good government. I think that's particularly important to the Canadian character, and I see a complete thumbing of the nose of the important characteristic of our society in this bill.

Local government in particular is a valuable part of Canadian society. As the political science textbooks tell us, it's the most accessible to the people, and in my long experience in Toronto that is generally the case. It's invariably the first to respond to new conditions, to immigrants, to changes, and its processes are much more open, much more flexible, much more adaptable.

We must consider government not just in terms of economic efficiency but what it provides to the character of a city. Local government is extremely important, I believe, and I have experienced, in the nature of a society. It creates narratives of self. It creates a sense of assurance and openness on the one hand, or a sense of fear, as you've so often heard in the proposals before you in the last couple of weeks, on the other hand. Government must be planned, exercised, evaluated and changed with great care because it's an extremely important, valuable institution in Canadian society.

As I've told you, I've lived in Metro virtually all of my life, but I've lived elsewhere and I've travelled extensively. I've had the honour of representing Toronto across North America and around the world in athletics many times, and through my work in athletics I've had an opportunity to compare different cities and how they work.

Through my work as an Olympic leader and analyst, I get this experience of comparing cities almost every four

years as the International Olympic Committee evaluates the cities proposing to stage the next Olympic Games in the cycle, and all of us take courses, really, in urban planning, design and local government in the course of evaluating bids. On all of these measures Toronto stands up very well. People who visit the city, people to whom you talk in other Olympic cities, all praise the nature of this city and how it works. They praise its open character, they praise its multicultural openness, they praise institutions like intervenor funding that facilitate the opportunity for otherwise marginalized or disadvantaged groups to intervene in the public participation process. They admire it for all of the reasons we love this city, why it means so much to us, why the character of this city is part of our narratives of place and home that we cherish.

Don't wreck it. Please withdraw this bill and start again.

**Mr Silipo:** Mr Kidd, thank you very much for your presentation. I want to start with the last point you made. I don't know if we'll have time to get into others but I wanted to get that one in particularly. One of the arguments that government members have made — I think in fact the minister himself made it — was that one of the examples of one of the good things they see will come out of this amalgamation is that Toronto will be in a much better position to host future Olympics and that somehow this unification is going to make the difference. Others have pointed out that cities that have even more local governments than we do, such as Sydney, are standing just as well in terms of their competition. I wonder if you could just comment on that, what the amalgamation does or doesn't do on that kind of line of rationale and thinking about something like an Olympic bid.

**Mr Kidd:** Quite frankly, I don't think it can be claimed as either a plus or a minus for the Olympic bid. I was a member of the bid group in 1990 for the 1996 games. People loved our city who supported us in that bid. I can assure you that whatever happens, even if the worst eventualizes, we will make a strong pitch the next time around. There's a tremendous respect for Canadians and our ability to stage major events well, with openness and so on. Some of my friends who oppose this bill would also bring the Olympic argument in; I just don't think it's relevant.

**Mr Silipo:** In making reference to our Constitution, you referred to peace, order and good government as being one of the tenets that we've chosen which makes us different from other societies. Just as more of a comment, and I'd ask your reaction to it, it's certainly my sense that what we are getting as a result of this is in fact the eradication of good government as we know it at the municipal level, that what we are seeing is in fact not something that's going to make for better government, because I understand that to mean a closeness at the local level that brings about the kinds of quicker reactions you have talked about in terms of dealing with emerging problems and being more open than perhaps other levels of government are. I just wonder if you'd comment further on that.

**Mr Kidd:** That's certainly my fear. I tried to say that, and you've said it much better than I have. I think one of

the qualities of life in this city that so many of us value is the openness of government, and that's not only in the city of Toronto, where I currently reside. I've been a citizen of Scarborough; I've lived in North York; I briefly lived in York. It's that feeling that city hall is accessible that is so much a part of how we define ourselves, as I've said, our narrative of ourselves. I fear that will be lost.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing before us this evening, Mr Kidd.

I'd like to just check and see: Do we have Robert Wilson? James Binnie? All right. This committee stands adjourned until 7 pm.

*The committee recessed from 1751 to 1900.*

#### LAKESIDE AREA NEIGHBOURHOODS ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the standing committee. Our first presenter is Margaret Blair, of the Lakeside Area Neighbourhoods Association. Good evening, Mrs Blair. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mrs Margaret Blair:** On behalf of the Lakeside Area Neighbourhoods Association, I would like to thank you for inviting us to be part of these important hearings. Our association makes three points.

I'll just stop. It seems to be a bit noisy over here. I haven't got a very loud voice.

**The Vice-Chair:** Could we have quiet back there, please. Do continue.

**Mrs Blair:** The first point is that it seems to us that the Progressive Conservative government is not acting as genuine conservatives should. Genuine conservatives, we think, are cautious to institute change, in particular where nothing is wrong. Any change is made after due consideration and due process, after a period of thought.

We agree that there is a problem of overlapping and sometimes conflicting levels of government at the local level. However, Metro municipalities are relatively fine. The acute problems are (a) the higher tax rates for Metro businesses versus the outer area businesses, and (b) the fragmentation in the outer areas, with no fewer than 18 different economic development areas and uncontrolled, expensive sprawl. The Ontario government has not even mentioned tackling these acute problems.

We urge the government of Ontario to take account of the well-considered reports which come from studies of local government matters with no previous bias as to what they should find out and conducted with due process and input from interested parties.

The Crombie Who Does What report and the KPMG report were both from studies conducted in too short a time frame to allow for in-depth thought leading to sound conclusions. They were conducted without consultation with all the affected public and took amalgamation as a given.

The genuinely conservative approach is reflected in the Golden and Fair Tax Commission studies, which were conducted with enough of a time allowance, consulted all the relevant interests and produced thoughtful, sound conclusions on what we should do.

To sum up, we'd like the Conservatives to return to acting like genuine conservatives.

The second point is that we need stronger local government. Since 1988, I and local residents, members of our association, have worked to ensure that local politicians will understand the concerns we have in our southeastern area of the city. Given the small size of the city of Toronto's government, we have been able to establish contact with all the politicians and explain our position. We have been able to persuade local government representatives to take action on our local matters, even when they have not picked up on these themselves.

Examples have been the matters of having the dilapidated roads and sidewalks in the area renewed to a higher level than previously, ie, to the level of other parts of the city; relocating the stench-producing Darling Rendering Co, which was to receive a new 20-year lease; and traffic control and parking, among many others.

In a larger area of representation, local interests and leverage will be lost. We need a strengthened local level of government.

We also favour replacing the middle levels of government, such as the Metro government, with an expanded regional government to plan for such aspects as cost-saving intensification of the suburban outer areas and overall economic and transport development in the GTA. However, returning to being conservative about this, we must do this on the basis of sound financial studies and widespread consultation with citizens, agencies and different levels of government, such as are to be found in the Golden report.

In other words, our point is that we need a stronger local government at the local level and then a GTA one.

The third point is, we would like everyone to take the time to think things through and do them properly.

Lastly, you have shown the good and conservative judgement of giving the outer areas a year to think about what they would like to do, but you have not given this time to the Metro Toronto municipalities. Why? The GTA must be planned as a whole.

The November municipal election date need not be graven in stone. Residents will be happy to allow their elected representatives another year. In the meantime, we can think and produce sound conclusions. In this scenario you, on your part, should be willing to open yourselves to different, creative solutions which will lead to better management of scarce resources. If you don't, you will fail. You will be fought by residents' groups through to and after the next election, if necessary. They will fight to achieve a sound outcome for all our municipalities.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** Thank you, Mrs Blair. I appreciate your coming forward and taking the time to prepare and deliver a presentation here today. One of things that's a bit frustrating for us is that when you have an issue like this — and we are sympathetic with the press; they've only got a certain number of column inches they can dedicate towards a topic even as important as this one — a lot of the background information doesn't get out there.

I look at your first point, because we may not have time to deal with all three. For example, in your point 1(b), on the very same day this bill was introduced, the minister was very clear that there would be this spring a board put in place that would provide that missing piece

of the puzzle as you've described it there, the Greater Toronto Services Board. Milt Farrell, a very respected former civil servant — respected, I'm sure I can say, by all three parties, because we all employed him at various times — is right now, as we speak, having discussions with every one of the councils of the 905 and 416 cities and trying to develop some kind of consensus before bringing forward a bill that will address a lot of these concerns and ensure that there is the coordination across the boundaries. That point perhaps is not quite accurate in your brief.

There's another thing I would like to ask you in the form of a question. In your opening preamble to point 1, you say, "Any change is made after due consideration and due process, after a period of thought."

Last fall, in response to the first discussions about the specific bill — not the whole issue of municipal reform; that's been debated by all three parties for many years — the six mayors themselves went out and prepared a report. You may recall that one; Change for the Better, they called it. In that report — and all six mayors signed off — they said, not us, that there were savings of \$240 million to be achieved by consolidating the services. They also said, and I'm not misquoting them here, that the time to do that was now, that there was no reason to delay that.

If we have even the mayors telling us that there are those many dollars on the table and the only point of dissension between the two of us is that they think we should consolidate all the services but still keep six governments — we think if you consolidate the services, it makes sense to consolidate the governance over those services. In the context of \$240 million a year that we're leaving on the table in duplication, why would we delay any further?

#### 1910

**Mrs Blair:** This was again a hastily put together study by the mayors, wasn't it?

**Mr Gilchrist:** All they did was ask their own officials, "How much would you save if you could put this together?" I think you don't need to spend a lot of time. If you're the chief planning director, presumably you know your job well enough to give an answer to the mayors on that question.

**Mrs Blair:** If you've read Andrew Sanctor's comments, he seems to have done a worldwide study. There seem to be diseconomies of scale after you get beyond the one million people level of delivering services. Even Mike Harris said this in a quote in the Fergus News Express, I think it's called, in 1994. In very large agglomerates, services do cost more, and I don't think any of the other evidence fits this, that it would cost less. It seems to be it would cost more beyond a certain size of numbers of people.

**Mr Gilchrist:** As a final point, because I know we're running out of time here, unfortunately that's one of the myths that's out there. I could show you three studies that have been done by people who say that unless you grow beyond a million, you won't have the economies of scale to compete with the other leading cities of the world, like Hong Kong and Singapore.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs Blair, for being here tonight.

#### DUNDAS WEST RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** I call upon Doug Webster and Duncan Farnan of the Dundas West Residents Association. Good evening, gentlemen, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Doug Webster:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My name is Doug Webster. I'm a resident of Toronto. With me is my neighbour, Duncan Farnan. Another member of our association, Hilary Bell, was not able to attend tonight due to stomach flu; she sends her regrets. We are members of the executive committee of the Dundas West Residents Association. We will talk about the role of residents' associations, their importance in maintaining a healthy community and why Bill 103 is bad for residents' associations and, in turn, bad for our city and Metro at large.

Toronto achieved its status as the best city in the world because it works. One of the characteristics of Toronto that makes it work is the existence of hundreds of residents' associations like ours. Our neighbourhood is in the riding of High Park-Swansea, represented here at Queen's Park by Derwyn Shea, who I see is not present. We are bounded to the south by Bloor Street, to the east by the CNR railway line, to the north by the CPR railway line and to the west by Keele Street.

The area contains approximately 2,200 homes, and our membership includes 186 households and approximately 350 registered voters who represent a cross-section of society. It has been in existence for over 15 years. It is not incorporated, nor is it affiliated with any political party, and the members participate on a voluntary basis. We meet on the third Monday of each month, at which time concerns are tabled and addressed in a semi-formal, democratic environment. Our mandate is to provide a forum for addressing issues that impact on the wellbeing of the neighbourhood. Those issues range from crosswalk safety to rezoning.

Too many of the problems that the association has to deal with exist because our elected officials haven't recognized them as priorities. Too often the reason for their oversight is that they're so busy swimming upstream that they lose touch with what matters at a neighbourhood level. Our elected representative who is most in touch and most responsive to neighbourhood concerns is our city councillor, Rob Maxwell.

A city ward is small enough that councillors know their neighbourhoods. They also know that residents' associations can significantly influence the vote come election day. On the other hand, a Metro ward is large enough that a neighbourhood's votes may not be so significant. Judging by lack of response by our Metro councillor, Dennis Fotinos, to our concerns, he believes this to be true.

The DWRA knows from experience that bigger wards result in less responsive elected officials. For this reason, among others, the association is against Bill 103. Toronto's residents' associations have contributed immeasurably to making this the best city in the world. To

function effectively, they need access to responsive elected officials who are in close contact with and dependent on the neighbourhoods they serve.

**Mr Duncan Farnan:** Good evening. Tonight I'd like to make two points, one regarding Bill 103, section 5, which is the so-called neighbourhood committees, and one regarding my neighbourhood skating rink. I'm going to take the most important one first.

Each night since mid-December, a dozen or more neighbours from our area take turns to scrape, sweep and flood in our local park to make a rink. It ain't fancy, it hasn't got wooden walls, it hasn't got lockers and it hasn't got hockey nets. It's snowbanks and sandbox seating. We're often out at all hours, from 6 in the morning to 12 at night, to do the chores that a volunteer rink imposes on its owners. On a real cold night, at 20 below and at 1 am, you can hear the ice freezing.

As we flood, we talk. We don't talk politics — much. We talk family and we talk community. We actually have quite a few interesting topics: We talk shell ice; we talk about whether we could market a rink video; we talk about which houses have been sold; who's on the Web; who's got whose kids and whose dogs; traffic; parking; schools; and of course, about when spring finally arrives. I think it actually arrived today.

None of us really knows each other very well, but a common sense brought us together: to build just a rink, just a small piece of common ground which we could all own and enjoy. Local skills, local knowledge, local love, local choice and local attachment built that rink. There was no false claim of institutional prerogative to its making. There was no city government help to speak of, just a few hoses and maybe a lot of water.

My point in telling you this story is that you cannot teach civic ownership, nor can you impose it. You learn it by doing it, by walking the walk, by flooding the rink — and by sitting across from you tonight. When people are left alone to work out their own local destinies, good things happen. I think this government knows that, or did know it; I refer you to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Guide to Municipal Restructuring, 1996. This bill does not permit us that opportunity.

My second point is that Bill 103, through sections 5 and 16, the proposed neighbourhood committees, attempts to conceive of local government as an engineering problem for which a new solution or institution has to be found. I would recommend to this committee that it rethink embedding such an institutional structure into legislation.

Legislated monopolies, such as are proposed, invariably end in apathy and disorganization; they're prone to both political patronage and manipulation. I would also suggest that the deepest purpose of the committees will be to regulate and to make uniform. Like all institutions, their first goal will be to fight acrimoniously for survival and growth within the civic arena, not to take on the missions that are nominally staked out for them. And they will be costly.

At bottom what are the committees? A quick fix, an easy way out, a belief in magic and a mechanistic view of what constitutes community.

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In addition, the bill's provisions on the subject are so sparse that I had to turn to One Toronto for All of Us, December 1996, to understand what was being proposed and who was to do what to whom. Our reading is that we do not need "bodies [that] will create opportunities for citizens to participate directly in municipal government." Another quote, again from One Toronto for All of Us: "Nurturing Our Neighbourhoods. A special effort will be made to ensure that communities and neighbourhoods receive flexible and sensitive responses to their local needs — and that local voices are heard loud and clear."

I would suggest to the committee that the neighbours at my rink and those who presented to you over the last several weeks know infinitely more about their neighbourhoods and the things that matter to them than any committee can possibly plan for or envision. Thank you for your attention.

**Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt):** Thank you for your presentation. You're in kind of a unique position. I gather Mr Shea is your local member. I wonder if you've asked him this question. There was the Mike Harris task force on Metro before the election and Mr Shea was a key member of that, actually a co-chair. His report said, "The strongest signal we received during our consultation was that local government was the one closest to the people and it must remain so. The Metro level of government will be eliminated." This was the major recommendation of the Mike Harris task force and the starting point of the government's reform process. "The present number of six local governments will be retained." "Mike Harris will implement these reforms." In other words, it was very clear before the election what Mr Harris and Mr Shea, who was a co-chair, felt. Did Mr Shea explain why he's changed his opinion from that report to your group?

**Mr Farnan:** If he told us, I'm not sure I remember, but I'd like to pick up on one of your points. In the 1995 municipal elections, 10 out of 28 of the councillors were acclaimed. I'm really appalled at that.

Do you want to know the ridings? I'm happy to read them into the record: York Eglinton; Etobicoke Kingsway-Humber; Toronto Davenport; North York Centre; North Toronto; North York Spadina; Etobicoke Markland-Centennial; Toronto Trinity-Niagara; North York Centre South; North York Humber. That's not representative government for us. Those people were acclaimed. They're not the people we refer to. We refer to our local councillors at the local level.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, gentlemen, for being here this evening. We've run out of time. We appreciate you being here.

#### NORTH HILL DISTRICT HOME OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Stanley Taube. Good evening, Mr Taube, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation.

**Mr Stanley Taube:** I am the president of the North Hill District Home Owners' Association. The North Hill district comprises approximately 1,000 homes in Toronto.

The boundaries are St Clair on the south, Spadina Road on the west, Avenue Road on the east, and up to the belt line. Our association currently has 442 paid-up home-owners.

The district is very established. It's part of the old village of Forest Hill. Our association has been in existence in its present form since 1953. Many residents have lived in Toronto all their lives. Some of the homes are occupied by second generations of the same families. I personally was born in Toronto a little over 60 years ago and have lived here continuously.

First, let me give our conclusion. Based on all the materials we've received, based on the many meetings our directors and many of our members have attended, based on our district's general public meeting, which we held February 19, I have to tell you that the overwhelming majority of our directors and of our members is opposed to amalgamation.

The best evidence we've received seems to indicate that the optimum size of a municipality is greater than 100,000 so you get some economies of scale, but less than one million, because once you get over one million people the structure becomes unwieldy and less cost-efficient.

The study we found very helpful in this regard is the Wendell Cox study, which I'm sure has been alluded to by other participants. That shows how it becomes proportionately more expensive for megacities to deliver municipal services. Your government, the provincial government — our government — is proposing to dismantle the municipality. We take the position that the onus is on you, the proponent of the idea, to prove the case. We don't have the onus to disprove the case.

If I can give you an analogy to the private sector, imagine if you had a corporation that had \$7 billion of revenues, which is what we're talking about at the Metro level of government and the six municipalities. Imagine the studies and the irrefutable evidence that would be brought forward before that structure was taken apart and reorganized.

We're concerned, and this has been brought up many times, that with fewer elected city councillors representing a larger number of citizens, there would be a lack of responsiveness, there would be more reliance on staff members, on bureaucrats who are not elected and who are of course not accountable. A megacity would focus on mega-issues. Mega-issues are important, but local concerns, the small items, would tend to get shuffled to the bottom of the pile. It's these local concerns that can really make a great deal of difference in the quality of life we enjoy.

A second issue that has arisen is this uploading and downloading. It's not part of Bill 103, but because of the way you introduced it, because of the way the public debate has gone, this uploading and downloading have become interwoven irreversibly with Bill 103. We feel, as do virtually all participants at these hearings, that soft services are completely inappropriate for the municipal taxpayer to bear. Soft services fluctuate widely with economic cycles; they go up astronomically in times of recession. Municipalities can't really have their property taxes going up and down according to the economic

cycle, and as you know, municipalities are unable to borrow to finance operating deficits should they incur them.

We believe in income redistribution. I think all fairminded people do. But surely the way to do your income redistribution is through the progressive income tax system, which is based on ability to pay, not on the size and location of your house or business property.

This whole debate focuses on the need for better coordination among the three levels of government, federal, provincial and municipal. Each level is trying to get its house in order by downloading financial responsibilities, and the buck unfortunately stops at the bottom for the municipal taxpayer.

We feel that as a minimum this uploading and downloading should be revenue-neutral at the end of the day, hopefully even a little bit of tax relief for the property owner, particularly the business owner. Let the property tax bear hard services — roads, parks, transportation, police and fire protection and similar items — and, if necessary to keep a financial balance in the province, then leave the hard component of education costs on the municipal tax roll: the building and maintenance of schools.

I'd also like to deal briefly with the assessment issue. It has come into the forefront as more taxes are loaded on to the homeowner, and it's also part of the discussion. I want to use the opportunity to express our association's strong opposition to actual value assessment. We feel it would be very damaging. We recognize the need for change; we understand that. I would like to suggest that if AVA is to go forward, either consider putting a cap on the amount of increase, say up to 15%, or if a cap doesn't seem to work, consider extending the phase-in period to 20 years from the present eight. At least 5% a year will give the opportunity for some reasonable adjustment.

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Going back specifically to Bill 103, one has to recognize the political realities: The government has gone too far to back away; the opposition has gone too far to back away. We are suggesting as a reasonable compromise that you go to the four-city model; that is, eliminate Metro, fold York and East York into Toronto, and wind up with four municipalities that are of manageable size. That way, you will have gone forward and the opposition will have received some satisfaction, and 10, 15, 20 years down the road the thing can be visited again to see if further changes have to be made.

Use a GTA coordinating body to ensure the delivery of efficient services over a wider area. We'd also recommend the appointment of an independent municipal auditor-general to periodically review municipal finances and look for cost efficiencies. It seems to work at the federal and provincial levels. Why not try it at the municipal level?

What our association wants, really, is just enough municipalities and just enough local politicians — no more and no less than are necessary — to maintain the level of services we now have and the quality of life we now have. We urge you to consider the four-city model

as a reasonable compromise. It may be a win-win situation for everyone.

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to be here this evening. I thank Isabel Bassett, our MPP, for being here to allow us to put forward our association's concerns and our suggestions for you to consider.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Taube. We have less than one minute, Mr Wood.

**Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North):** I'd like to thank you for your excellent presentation. You've brought forward some amendments. I'm not sure if the government members are going to listen to them. If you have a comment on that, I'd like to hear it; I know they're sitting here. When we get ideas and suggestions that come forward, are they going to be listened to or are we going to have this battle continue even after Bill 103 is passed into law, with the dividing lines continuing for years and years to come?

**Mr Taube:** The government doesn't confide in me, but I hope with fairminded people like Mr Gilchrist and others present, consideration will be given to suggestions that have been made. I'm hoping you'll come together and come up with something that everybody can find acceptable.

**Mr Len Wood:** Maybe we'll get some amendments tabled tonight.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Taube, for being here tonight.

### PATRICIA PETERSEN

**The Vice-Chair:** I call upon Patricia Petersen, please. Good evening, Ms Petersen, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to give your presentation.

**Ms Patricia Petersen:** Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I think I'm going to be the odd man out this evening. My name is Patricia Petersen and I wish to speak this evening in support of the proposed amalgamation of the governments of Metropolitan Toronto. I speak both from professional and personal experience.

I'm a political scientist and have been teaching urban politics at the University of Toronto since 1980. I direct the urban studies program at that university. For the past 25 years, I have been active in municipal politics in Metro Toronto as a citizen, first as an executive member of the Association of Women Electors of Metropolitan Toronto and later as the chairman of the Scarborough planning board. I have lived in the Beach for the past 33 years.

I must admit I feel a bit like the oracle at Delphi this evening, sitting here discussing the issue of amalgamation. Ten years ago, when the Liberal government of David Peterson was considering the direct election of Metro council, I appeared before the city of Toronto council executive committee to warn Toronto that if it supported the direct election of Metro council, it was highly likely that the province would amalgamate the city governments in Metro within 10 years. Thank you for proving me right, actually. Why? Because the friction between the Metro council and local councils would increase and eventually reduce the ability of all councils to govern effectively.

The battle over market value reassessment is just one case in point. The most absurd incident in this fight was the decision of my council to appeal the assessment of a number of residential properties in Toronto. Toronto council retaliated by appealing the assessment of a number of homes in Scarborough. This created a tremendous backlog in assessment appeal cases and frightened many residents of Toronto and Scarborough who were barraged with official notices of reassessment and had no idea what was going on.

Madam Chairman, members of the committee, like the people who have spoken against amalgamation, I too want a city government that is innovative, I too want a government that is sensitive to the community, I too want a government that is democratic. However, I believe very strongly that an amalgamated government gets us much closer to these goals than the structure we have now or a return to only six or four local governments. Let me explain.

Innovation: Most of the innovation that has occurred in government policy in Metropolitan Toronto has originated with municipal staff. It is not the size of an organization that determines whether it is innovative; it is its structure. Institutions that are organized hierarchically are less likely to be innovative than those that are more democratically structured. "Flatter" organizations, and "entrepreneurial" organizations are some of the terms we use to describe these democratic forms.

For the past three years, I have been studying how one city government, with over 108,000 employees, is redesigning itself — successfully I might add — to become flatter, more democratic, more innovative. It's also the richest city in Europe, by the way.

We have some outstanding city employees in every government in Metropolitan Toronto. I know, for I have taught and worked with many of them. They deserve a supportive, progressive council that understands the needs of the entire Metro community and that has the authority to plan for this larger community in all areas of municipal politics.

Sensitivity to the community: For the past 10 years I have directed an internship program at the university which places students in the offices of municipal politicians. I would argue, and I am sure my students would agree, that Metro councillors are as sensitive to their communities as city councillors. We all know that there are many councillors on all councils, Metro and local, who are very responsive and supportive of their communities. I notice people here tonight did not like Dennis Fotinos, but I'm sure Jack Layton and Olivia Chow's communities would feel they are certainly supportive and sensitive to the community.

Furthermore, I have evidence to show that the smaller governments in Metro are not always as sensitive as they could be to constituencies in their communities with special needs. In 1991 I did some research for the International Union of Local Authorities. I examined the response of the seven governments in Metro to what StatsCan calls "visible minorities." As you know, there has been a very large increase in visible minorities in Metro over the past 30 years. This is a population that has been very vulnerable to discrimination in other anglo-

American cities in the past and we wanted to make sure that this discrimination did not happen here.

I examined policies on employment equity, access to services, distribution of grants, contract procedures and the establishment of race relations committees. The two governments that had done the most in all these areas were the city of Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto. Part of the reason for this was money. They were the two richest governments and could afford staff to design and implement these policies. However, there were other governments that were almost as rich as the city of Toronto and that had larger visible minority populations than the city of Toronto, yet these governments had done extraordinarily little.

Democracy: Democratic government demands an informed and responsible citizenry. How informed are our citizens? Not very, if municipal elections are any example. Most people learn about the candidates and the issues from the newspapers, but there are so many people running for office that it is impossible for the papers to give them more than cursory mention. Approximately 85% of election news focuses on the campaign in the city of Toronto, and in particular the mayoral race. I have been involved in every municipal election since 1972, and every election there are always some people who enter the polling station where I am scrutineering — it could be anywhere in Scarborough — angry because they could not vote for David Crombie or Art Eggleton or June Rowlands or John Sewell.

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How responsible are our citizens? I sometimes think from community meetings that our sense of responsibility stretches only as far as the end of the block. John Stuart Mill believed in local government because it educated us in democracy. What kind of an education do we get here? More often than not the lesson is: The squeaky wheel gets the grease. I cannot believe that this tyranny of the loudest is the democracy Mill had in mind.

Like it or not, Metropolitan Toronto is one city. The city of Toronto was already aware of this in 1949 when it petitioned the province to allow it to amalgamate with the suburbs because, and I quote from the city of Toronto master plan of 1943, "The political boundaries of the city bear no relation to the social and economic life of its people." It is something the Association of Women Electors of Metropolitan Toronto believed in, even though most of its members lived in the city of Toronto.

The present system of fragmented government, that understands the term "community" as only a cluster of streets, makes it easy for us to forget other interests in this city, especially the interests of those who are less articulate, just because they do not live in our neighbourhood. The present system of fragmented government does not instil in us a sense of collective responsibility for the Metropolitan Toronto community, our community, and its future.

I find it curious in this debate that the people who are fighting amalgamation and who would consider themselves social egalitarians are using the language of public choice theory, the theory of free market economists, to support their position and that a conservative government that is committed to the market and free enterprise is

giving us a government structure that will allow us in Metro Toronto to distribute benefits and costs more equitably across the city.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. We have one minute. I'll ask Mr Gilchrist, then.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Ms Petersen. I appreciate your coming before us tonight. As I'm sure you wouldn't be surprised, we've had a number of educators and a number of urban planners come who had a different perspective. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to finish a point with an earlier presenter that there's this myth around out there that all urban planners and certainly all educators are of one mind, that cities reach a certain size and then they collapse on themselves.

I don't know whether you're familiar with the work of Neal Pierce or Robert Dahl or Michael Keating or J.J. Palen.

**Ms Petersen:** David Rusk was the other one.

**Mr Gilchrist:** David Rusk, exactly. Could you comment on the general conclusion they have about the need for growth?

**Ms Petersen:** Generally speaking, most Americans who come to Toronto would think we were absolutely crazy if we were going to get rid of Metro or wouldn't even consider amalgamation seriously. David Rusk springs to mind because people are very interested in number crunching, and he studied about 250 metropolitan areas in the United States. What he discovered was that cities where the governments were fragmented within these metropolitan areas suffered more from inequality, racial and economic segregation, so that you ended up with what everyone is afraid of here: the hole in the middle of the doughnut.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you, Ms Petersen. I'm sorry, we're out of time. Thank you for coming this evening.

#### WILLIAM FERGUSON

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon William Ferguson, please. Good evening, Mr Ferguson. Welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation. If there is time then, we'll ask Mr Phillips of the Liberal caucus to ask questions. Please begin.

**Mr William Ferguson:** Madam Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the opportunity to speak to Bill 103 on amalgamation. My background is being a lifelong resident of Toronto. I believe we have a very good thing going for us, and I feel that Bill 103 will certainly subtract from that in a very significant way.

Based on your track record and the timing on the omnibus bill one year ago, it appears this government tried to slip another one by us this time. Thankfully, we were alert enough to detect that something was wrong when we realized the democratic process and a political mandate were missing.

I admit to voting PC, for Ms Bassett, and was hopeful of a tax cut of 30%, or less if necessary; 30% isn't mandatory in this, I don't think. It was a worthy experiment to get Ontario and Canada closer to full employment targets. Structural tax reform to rejig a fair deal for everyone is fully supported without any partisan politics, and I have no objection to paying my fair share.

My current vote is one of no confidence, however. This seems to be echoed by your own MPPs' blend of contradictions and doubletalk. Citizens indeed voted for one level of government in Toronto, and that is, in the last municipal election we voted to do away with Metro council. Instead, we were presented with Metro Toronto amalgamation without consent or consultation, as well as unelected trustees for good measure. Thankfully, Justice Brennan provided a clear message on trustees being implemented illegally. Also ignored were the current recommendations from local expert studies like the Golden report and the Who Does What report.

The actual experiences of other cities like Winnipeg and Halifax suggest there are no cost savings, yet we are asked to support a large scale plan on blind faith with a blank cheque when there is no hint of success. There was no thought or hint of this plan in the Common Sense Revolution either.

Further umbrage followed with a KPMG study and an advertising campaign at public expense which attempts to sell the program via window dressing. The birth of this amalgamation plan is clearly a premature breech birth that offends our sensibilities. I speak for many of my neighbours and people in my neighbourhood. In short, premature birth means too soon and it's backward.

The planned powers of the transition team are even more disturbing. They appear to have unlimited access and power, yet offer no disclosure or review by the public or redress via the courts. Private deals with public funds can become the operating standard behind closed doors, without any accountability. The experiences of other communities appear to have resulted in horror and hostility rather than the image the government is portraying to the public in this respect.

My experience in implementing large-scale new ideas has revealed there is no substitute for full disclosure of the facts and how people will be affected by them. Unproven new ideas are often viewed as either very smart or very dumb. These committee hearings clearly reveal where Bill 103 currently resides in this respect.

My suggestions are these:

- (1) Listen to the people with respect.
- (2) Formulate a plan that is clear to everyone, with full disclosure.
- (3) Legislate the mandate of the people fairly and openly.
- (4) Implement the plan once, correctly, in an open, calm and reasoned way.
- (5) Send me a bill for my fair share.

In closing, the failure to keep the quality of our life going forward in Toronto shall surely be a drag on all of Ontario. Without a healthy Toronto, foreign tourists and trade could well skip Ontario, and I could too, but not before I vote in the next election, for sure.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Ferguson. We'll go to Mr Phillips for a question.

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**Mr Phillips:** Thank you, Mr Ferguson. I think your brief reflects the sense of frustration we hear from many people certainly about the process we're going through and the feeling that we're tinkering with what many

regard as the finest urban area in North America without really knowing where we're going.

If I were betting, I thought Mike Harris was going to do what he said he was going to do before the election. I was very familiar with this because it was the former mayor of Scarborough who headed it up and Mr Leach, Mr Kells and Mr Shea, all three members of the government now. They looked at this over a fairly lengthy period of time, and their conclusion was the exact opposite of what the government is doing here. They said that the strongest signal was that local government closest to the people was the best. They also pointed out, "Beware of so-called false economies of scale in which smaller operations are subsumed in the larger ones for the sake of efficiency but are soon bogged down by the growth of bureaucracy." In other words, be very careful of people saying that bigger is cheaper. We've now had, yesterday I guess, Deloitte and Touche, who looked at it and suggested that costs may very well go up in a substantial way with amalgamation.

The other thing Mr Leach said before the election, as Mr Harris's co-chair of this, was that their recommendation was to get rid of the Metro level of government, the present number of six local governments would be retained and the Mike Harris government would implement these reforms.

My question to you is, as a community leader, was that more or less your expectation of what you would have expected would more likely have happened than what we're seeing here now?

**Mr Ferguson:** Yes, I believe so. I think the population at large fully supported local government in the form it now exists, and if you want to do away with the one level of government, do it at the Metro level. There is more representation, but I think we like it that way and can afford to keep it that way. The additional expense of doing it that way is something the average taxpayer is willing to bear, willingly. I have no problem with it.

**Mr Phillips:** The theme of your suggestions, your recommendations, is, "Let's stop."

**Mr Ferguson:** Slow it down.

**Mr Phillips:** Slow down.

**Mr Ferguson:** Just like Barbara Hall said, slow it down and do it once, correctly.

**Mr Phillips:** An earlier presentation suggested the delay of the next municipal election, at least in the metropolitan area, for a year to provide more time for reasonable study. Remember, the Peat Marwick study was done in three weeks. Would you think that would be a reasonable suggestion, to say, "Let's give ourselves another year to look at this thing in some detail before it's rammed through"?

**Mr Ferguson:** Yes, and more time if necessary. I don't think this agenda has to be streamed to the next provincial election.

**Mr Phillips:** The previous presenter reached some conclusions that suggested that on a Metro-wide basis they'd be more likely to see some community programs implemented than on a city-by-city basis. In other words, that we'd be more likely to see some innovative programs implemented across Metro if we had one Metro rather than an organization like the city of Toronto or the city

of East York. From your experience with dealing with the issues that I sense are important to you, do you have any feeling for that?

**Mr Ferguson:** It's possible that you might get larger programs but fewer of them. To support one of the previous people with his ice skating rink at a local level, that doesn't sound too viable. It'll get lost in the shuffle, I believe.

**Mr Phillips:** Your five recommendations here, as I say, I think the theme of them is all one and the same, which is, "Let's give ourselves some reasonable time." Why would you think the government is trying to rush this through from start to finish in three months?

**Mr Ferguson:** Because it is radical change, and if they thought they could get it through by disguising it, properly or improperly, they might do it more quickly and more successfully, in their mind.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Ferguson, for being here this evening.

### BETSY CARR

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Betsy Carr. Good evening, Ms Carr, and welcome to the standing committee. You have 10 minutes in which to make your presentation. I'll ask Mr Wood from the NDP if there's time for questions. Please begin.

**Ms Betsy Carr:** Good evening. My name is Betsy Carr, of North York. Our family has lived in Don Mills since its inspired conception as a planned community, and with my husband we continue active, informed participation in public affairs.

My universities are Manitoba and Toronto. My career was in social work and activism via the Raging Grannies' protest songs. I am proud to add my honour of receiving Canada's Persons Award from then-Governor General Jeanne Sauvé for my service.

My intervention starts with my unequivocal opposition to the terms of the Ontario government's Bill 103. Further, I oppose the methods of implementation, which are totally unacceptable. I take exception to the proposed arbitrary downloading of soft, unpredictable social services on to the property taxes, which are least related to ability to pay. Such income-levelling programs should be a charge on income tax. In return, ability to control more predictable school operation financing would be a prize for the province. As well, the \$1-billion total reserve funds required of the five cities appear to be vulnerable in the event of amalgamation unless legal constraints are imposed.

You have heard this many times in these hearings, yet the unsupported arguments and blandishments continue to upset and offend voters, including some of your own party members. Aroused citizens like the thousands who marched in opposition down Yonge Street on February 15 matched the route and the anger of the Mackenzie Rebellion in 1837.

The responsibility of this committee and all members of the Legislature to their constituents is not just to hear objections to Bill 103 but actually to take them into account. Presentations and other protests show serious and well-founded weaknesses in the bill's concept. MPPs must act on what they hear in this process, not on

evidence they may hope to hear. On this basis, they must vote No to Bill 103.

In support of my position is the upside-down process employed by the Ontario government for such mammoth changes. Discussions should be before drafting of the bill. The process is, first a green paper, in this case provided by the Golden report on the GTA, which has been virtually ignored; then circulating a government white paper setting out the government's intentions and inviting public discussion and recommendations. Using this information, the bill can then be drafted. If well done, expensive and time-consuming hearings could be unnecessary. We all know these things.

First, on substance, withdraw Bill 103. There is no room for tinkering. Second, reverse the upside-down process which offends many who see some need for change. Give us a white paper for discussion of such government proposals first.

I wish to speak of fears that Bill 103 could return us to the bad old 1960s, when city planning was set by the development industry. The Globe and Mail's Colin Vaughan this week found an apparent link between Premier Harris, when he chose to attend here, and developers' president Stephen Kaiser of the Urban Development Institute and president David Hirsh of the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association. Both see ahead a quicker, streamlined approval process for a bonanza in mega-developments.

Beyond the ongoing need for some development and redevelopment of our city, we need a "healthy tension between neighbourhood concerns and grand designs," Colin Vaughan wrote. He reminded us that the original design for the Eaton Centre included demolishing old city hall and the Church of the Holy Trinity. Their preservation after citizen protests makes them a continuing source of pride in our city today. The downtown church ministers to human needs and even provides weekly practice space for us Raging Grannies who earlier sang megacity protests at these hearings. So it was a victory for the Toronto we want to live in.

## 2000

Also, I wish to make a spirited defence of Don Mills, Canada's first planned community. At present the Don Mills Residents Association is in prolonged dealings with North York planning department and big developers, similar to Mr Kaiser and Mr Hirsh. They are trying to add towering blocks of apartments or condos and closely packed town houses to our low-rise, treed landscape. We expected the Don Mills secondary plan, as approved by North York council, to avoid such excesses. Even with the present political system, it is very difficult: Two years of meetings and lobbying for citizens to oppose mega-developers who would prefer, as Colin Vaughan said, "to rid themselves of pesky neighbourhood types" in the way of their huge expected profits. For shame. Is this what a megacity will bring? Is it a forerunner of the future? Hubert Humphrey once observed, "We are in danger of making our cities places where business goes on but where life, in its real sense, is lost."

In summary, withdraw Bill 103, thereby perhaps earning a second term when you can get it right. Thank you.

**Mr Len Wood:** Thank you very much for your excellent presentation. I paid special attention. You're saying that no amount of tinkering or amendments that would be brought forward can help Bill 103, that it would have to be scrapped and start with a public consultation process that should have been done before Bill 103 was drafted, and then based on that, over a period of time, draft a new bill.

You're saying that you marched on February 15 down Yonge Street and had a discussion with a lot of people. There are comments that have come out that taxes could increase as much as 30% for residential, business taxes could increase hundreds of dollars, maybe thousands of dollars, and at the same time, thousands of people, unionized workers, will have to be fired in order to keep the cost of the megacity from going up. In your discussions with the other people, I'm sure that they are not going to be able to afford increases in taxes and don't like to see their neighbours, friends and relatives thrown out of work with this particular bill. Do you have any comments on that?

**Ms Carr:** I quite agree with you. I must say that on February 15 I was one of the Raging Grannies singing at the parade at the corner of College and Yonge for half an hour in the cold. But I still am, as you can see, very supportive of that show, where people were really demonstrating in a very good-humoured fashion how they felt and wanting to make some impression. I think what you say is quite true. The consensus seems to be now from the experts and from everyone that we would be heading into higher taxes, poorer services and a time of great disruption for us all.

**Mr Len Wood:** Bill 103 is only one number. Bill 104 and most of the other series of bills are a way of the province dumping or downloading on to the municipalities, whether it be cuts to long-term health care, education, municipal restructuring, right across the province, with the threat that if they don't amalgamate they won't get any assistance from the province whatsoever from the emergency fund that is set up.

I was at the Good Roads Convention and people are saying they voted Conservative in this last election but forget it the next time around because of the way everything is being rammed down everybody's throat and the province dumping everything on to people and getting rid of thousands of workers in this province. What reaction are you hearing from the people you're talking to? Is there more anger? Is it worry about what's going to happen? Is it concern out there?

**Ms Carr:** Yes, I believe so. My former federal MP, Alan Redway, who is a Conservative, has come out against this, and he's just one example of the switch, I think, in a lot of people's thinking.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry I must interrupt. Thank you very much, Ms Carr. We've run out of time.

## GUL NAWAZ

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Gul Nawaz.

**Mr Gul Nawaz:** I have my friend Zubair. He also wanted to say something but he could not get a time, so basically he agrees with my views.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. Good evening and welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Mr Nawaz:** First of all, thank you, Madam Chair, and members of the standing committee, for giving me the opportunity to speak to you. My name is Gul Nawaz. I am a practising chartered accountant with one of my offices located in Downsview. I used to live in Toronto. My two children were born in Northwestern General Hospital in the city of York.

Bill 103 deals specifically with the amalgamation of seven municipalities into one great city of Toronto. I get confused when the media and some people call it a megacity. Mexico City in Mexico, Los Angeles and New York in the USA, London in the UK, Tokyo in Japan, Manila in the Philippines, Karachi in Pakistan and Bombay in India all have several times the population of the proposed unified city of Toronto, yet these cities are not called megacities. This makes me wonder why Toronto is being called that.

As you know, several municipalities were unified to make the city of Mississauga. There was opposition even from the present mayor. However, it all went very well. Now I am sure both the residents and mayor are happy that Mississauga was created. Even so, the names Cooksville, Streetsville, Port Credit, Clarkson, Erindale and Meadowvale are all still being used and remain functioning communities. In Mississauga the councillors serve both regionally and locally, with the average ward much larger than proposed in Toronto. I am sure, with the passage of time, the residents of Toronto will not regret unifying the city.

Unification will reduce some jobs, eg, mayors and other senior administrative staff. At present Metro is providing 72% of the facilities and it is only the remaining 28% of services that are being unified. Therefore, I can't understand the reason for argument against the amalgamation.

Increased efficiency will decrease the cost and, I hope, also decrease the taxes. At present people don't know where to call for fixing potholes or cutting grass in the park. One political representative for all functions creates clearer and more accountable representations. Increased efficiency will reduce jobs in certain areas. You are all aware of how people in the public works department work: One works and four supervise or watch. I do hope there will be proper supervision to create efficiency, not to create more supervision.

We, the public, demand elected officials spend our dollars wisely. What recently happened in Etobicoke should be avoided at all costs through common and better rules. A unified city will come into operation in early 1998. In 1997, however, the elections will provide new elected officials for the amalgamated Toronto. These elected officials will have time to adjust and shape the new realities. I strongly feel that we should go full steam ahead with implementing the unification of the city as soon as possible.

2010

A unified city will present benefits to all of the residents of Toronto. Outside Canada, Toronto is a well-known city, unlike Etobicoke, North York, East York, Scarborough or York. A unified city can present and

coordinate a better approach to our tourist industry, which creates jobs that bring prosperity. People doing business across the greater Toronto area will deal with a more coordinated system of bylaw enforcement and policy on things such as smoking, for example. I think we have 144,800 bylaws for all the municipalities. One instead of seven municipalities will allow better implementation of rules and regulations for the entire city.

A clear new mission statement for a unified Toronto will have one council responsible to protect neighbourhoods, do long-range planning, as well as protect the central core. The number of politicians will be reduced to 44 from 106. Instead of seven city halls there will be only one. One local councillor in each riding clearly accountable to the people will bring clarity, efficiency and less costs. A unified city will also have more clout internationally. A unified city will reduce the artificial barriers between the current municipalities.

Municipalities currently have to compete against each other for growth and new business. This unification will have us all working together. At present the taxpayers are confused as to who does what. Some politicians also question about savings from streamlining the services. KPMG concluded that by the year 2000 there will be an annual savings of approximately \$300 million. Prior to that, the first three years' expected savings was to be over \$550 million. According to this study, over \$100 million will be saved just moving from seven governments to one. The KPMG study assumed there would be no reduction in services to the public. Services will be delivered where facilities are located and will be based on common sense. There will be a transitional body that will incur costs of training and employment, but it will not affect the overall savings.

Every day I meet people living and doing business in Toronto, Scarborough or Etobicoke the majority of whom are in favour of the unification. Some people have concerns for the municipal employees, but these employees are covered by separate legislation which defines the terms of their employment. Staff reductions can be effected by retirement planning and non-replacement of workers who leave voluntarily.

Business will grow and the builders will have to deal with fewer bureaucrats for their permits. A clear new mission will bring bureaucrats and politicians together, working for the good of the unified Toronto instead of just part of it. Neighbourhood committees and community councils will continue to provide input to the proper authorities.

In the end, I applaud the government for having the guts to introduce such reforms. This should have been done a long time ago. Even further, the government should not be concerned about the referendum being conducted by the present officials. They cannot be both party and referee. To me, this is a big hoax. Thank you once again for listening.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Mr Nawaz. I appreciate your coming before us here tonight and making a presentation. Just to correct one fact in your presentation, there are actually over 180,000 bylaws in the seven cities right now. That's what a business has to come to grips with to do business within Metro Toronto.

I'd like to pick up on something you mentioned early on, because there have been an awful lot of people who have made the point that somehow there is intrinsically a connection between the number of people a councillor serves and the quality of service. Do you believe, looking at how Mississauga has performed in the last few years, that Mississauga councillors have done a good job?

**Mr Nawaz:** They have done a very good job. I know most of the councillors and most of them were acclaimed, except there was one by-election because the present councillor retired. Their taxes have not increased for the last five years. This is one of the best cities in the world.

**Mr Gilchrist:** That's a pretty good indicator that people are happy with their councillors, that they're getting acclaimed.

In terms of the city as a whole, would you say Mississauga has out-performed economically the six cities within Metro?

**Mr Nawaz:** Absolutely. It has out-performed in every instance. But I still tell you that I love Toronto. I had a lot of trouble around the world, and when I come home I feel this is the best city in the world. I don't think we are going to reduce that by amalgamating. There will still be the aquarium now being built. There will be a lot of attractions. Our city is still the best city in the world.

**Mr Gilchrist:** We agree with you, Mr Nawaz, and in fact this is all about making a good city better. How would you suggest we deal with people who say that even though the councillors in Mississauga serve 64,000 people each, on average, and serve not just on the city council but also on the regional council, so they're doing in effect the city work and what we would call Metro work here today — how on earth can we be sympathetic to people who say you have to just keep serving 12,000 people, which is the case in some parts of Metro today? Is the proof not there in Mississauga that the quality of councillor is what is at stake, not the quantity?

**Mr Nawaz:** Absolutely. You are 100% right, because it's the quality. Our councillors have much bigger, wider areas, and I think they have done a very wonderful job attracting businesses and everything else.

**Mr Gilchrist:** We still have a few seconds. You've raised an interesting point there too, because geographically Mississauga is much larger than any of the component cities within Metro. Have you ever seen a problem with a councillor in one end of Mississauga understanding an issue in another part of Mississauga?

**Mr Nawaz:** No. I attend many meetings, I honestly tell you, and they are very sympathetic. They do listen.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Nawaz, for being here this evening.

#### CANADIAN BOOKBINDERS AND BOOK ARTISTS GUILD

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Ann Douglas, the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild. Good evening, Ms Douglas, and welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Ms Ann Douglas:** Thank you, Madam Chair and committee members. I'm speaking this evening as the president of the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists

Guild, more familiarly known by its acronym, CBBAG, or "Cabbage," to add our voice to the growing number of those in the arts community against Bill 103, the proposed amalgamation of Toronto. We would like to express our conviction that its passage would have a deleterious effect on the citizens of Ontario, Metro, Toronto and in particular the arts community. At a meeting on Monday night, our members took the opportunity to discuss and express some of their concerns, which have been incorporated into this address.

The guild, composed of bookbinders, printers, marblers, calligraphers, papermakers, conservators, archivists, librarians, book lovers and other members of the book arts community, is a not-for-profit, volunteer organization formed to promote the art of hand bookbinding and related fields in Canada. Our goals are as follows: to create a spirit of community among hand-workers in the book arts and those who love books; to promote greater awareness of the book arts; to increase educational opportunities and to foster excellence through exhibitions, workshops, lectures and publications.

We have approximately 500 members, 250 of whom live in Ontario. The rest are spread out across Canada and abroad. The skein of our national membership is held together by our newsletter, exhibitions and catalogues. It is important for the guild to reach its members by these means, for not all members live in or close to Toronto. CBBAG, like many other arts groups, is part of the larger warp and weft of the vibrant arts community which weaves the rich fabric of culture that Toronto offers to its citizens and visitors.

Our organization is self-supporting in our day-to-day activities. However, we do receive additional funding from the province, Metro and the city of Toronto, which allows us to hold workshops and bring a variety of speakers to our public meetings. Over the past 14 years the guild has sponsored, curated and circulated, both nationally and internationally, six major book-art exhibitions. In addition, CBBAG newsletters and exhibition catalogues have promoted a greater awareness of the book arts among our members and the general public, as did our first conference and book fair held last June here in Toronto. The abundant and diverse arts community is a major reason why people come to Toronto and Ontario. The rest of the world finds today's Toronto both attractive and intriguing; they say so in print, recommending it as a place to live and to visit. People come and spend their money on food, accommodation and other attractions while they're here.

#### 2020

CBBAG has found the province and the city of Toronto supportive of our efforts, while the larger Metro council often cannot be. In the past four years, we have received \$4,000 from Toronto and \$1,500 from the larger Metro, a ratio of two and a half to one. The bigger city-wide Metro council, in our experience, gives less to the arts than some MPPs' golf fees, for example. As amalgamation will mean fewer councillors from the downtown area, CBBAG is aware that funding for the arts will suffer. Our membership across Toronto and Ontario will feel this horrific and significant change.

Without a doubt, local government has always been the most approachable and easy to deal with. There is less red tape and bureaucracy. If citizens have concerns or problems, local city politicians are readily available. They are not tied by party politics in the support they are able to offer to their constituents. CBBAG is apprehensive that with the devolution into megacity, we will have to become involved in lobbying to gain the attention of the fewer, overburdened councillors. As volunteers, we have only so much time available to give to our organizations. Excessive time spent lobbying is time taken away from the pursuit of the goals of our organization.

Once cities become larger, they become not more but less efficient. Fewer councillors will have less time to represent many more diversified groups. Amalgamation will result in a larger bureaucracy that will become more time-consuming and frustrating to deal with. The speed with which megacity is to be forced upon us will result in chaos for several years while people try to figure out how to meld cities, institutions and groups into single bodies. Which system shall prevail? At what cost? In this chaos, many people and groups will suffer. No one but the Conservatives can see why this fundamental change has to be forced through with so limited an opportunity for public input and debate.

Solicitor General Bob Runciman is quoted as saying in the *Globe and Mail*: "What really disturbs me...is the fact that there has been literally no consultation. We've been excluded from the whole battle and that raises some very serious questions about the credibility of the results." Although he was speaking about hospital closures, now he knows how citizens feel about Bill 103 and amalgamation.

As for the province's idea of local neighbourhood committees, this plan would pit neighbourhood against neighbourhood. Realistically, affluent neighbourhoods will be more influential than others. Neighbourhood committees will not be as effective as the present city-wide system of committees and boards. Now in Toronto and other cities many citizens and elected politicians already serve on these committees and boards, giving their input to the local council. Various cities have different committees and boards according to their individual makeup and interests.

CBBAG members object to the black-or-white attitude of this government. Shades of grey are important and necessary; they are what give our multicultural society its character and life. The emphasis on being "with us or against us" evokes memories of the McCarthy era in the US, something I am sure Canada and its citizens do not wish to imitate. You have created an unnecessarily adversarial situation. No one or government should be above the law, something this government seems to have trouble remembering. Do not let Bill 103 follow the omnibus bill as rungs descending the long, slippery ladder of declining democracy.

Two good things about this amalgamation mess are (1) that it has made citizens aware of just how fragile democracy and our cities really are and (2) that it has caused citizens to come together to think and to discuss what it is about these cities of ours that is valuable and important.

We are not against change, but we would like the opportunity to participate in that change and to decide what would work best for us. Toronto is a great city. How fortunate it is that we are not like other large, gutted cities. Here, there is both the opportunity of employment and the enjoyment of the quality of life. We are the envy of other big cities. The vibrancy and diversity of the arts in Toronto make it great. They need our continuous support. Please do not let the arts, as represented by this colourful and healthy CBBAG, become so much wilted coleslaw. Stop this bill and let us, the citizens, discuss with you and contribute to Toronto's potential growth.

**Mr Phillips:** Thank you, a very good presentation, and I appreciate it very much. I don't think the government appreciates that we have a very unique urban environment here that's been shaped by decades of organizations and people like yourself who have helped to create it. I have a small understanding. I used to be chairman of the Metro school board, and so I had a chance to work first hand with the school boards around Metropolitan Toronto.

Believe me, I was very surprised at the recommendation of the government; I thought it would go the opposite way. This has all happened in three months. I don't think the government understands that for hundreds of thousands of people in Metropolitan Toronto this is a huge change in the way of life, and we are tinkering with something that is dear to the core of a lot of people.

Can I interpret from your remarks that your major recommendation is to stop this and give some time for reasoned debate on it? Is that the essence of your argument, and then at least let that debate take place over a sensible period of time?

**Ms Douglas:** Yes. I believe very much that this bill should be stopped and that we should all have a chance to debate it fully. As the lady from Don Mills said, I think there is a process by which this government has failed to deal with this situation. I'm sorry that they have done so, and I think it's a great disservice to both the city and the province.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Douglas, for being here tonight.

#### GEORGE AREGERS

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon George Aregers, please. Welcome to the standing committee. Please begin.

**Mr George Aregers:** My name is George Aregers. I was born and raised in this city, and I'd like to tell this committee I'm ashamed of what it is today. In the past 10 years, I've seen rot set in. I'm disgusted by the dirty streets, and the politicians we have seem to be catering to a certain group of people.

We have taxpayers, hardworking people, and especially the people — and I know a lot of them — who are working for minimum wage. They work maybe 12 hours a day, have a child and live in a basement apartment, and they're not looked after. They're the people who are paying a lot of taxes, and they're totally ignored.

My job takes me into a lot of places where I see a lot of waste in welfare. A lot of you people here don't really realize that there's a lot of welfare abuse; that possibly

it's over 75%. You don't go any further. Take a trip down to Yonge and Dundas, Parliament and Dundas, and look at the rot we've got.

**2030**

I had an opportunity the other day to go to Scadding Court. I don't know if you people know this or not; it's at Bathurst and Dundas. That was part of my job. I walked in there. There's a lot of kids running around the library, the swimming pool, a lot of elderly people, nice Portuguese people, and a big thing is set up there by the city of Toronto: Say No to the Megacity — all kinds of pamphlets and, heaped up in a big, huge basket, maybe 1,000 condoms in the same display.

When you call the politicians to say, "Hey, is that where our tax dollars are going?" — I'm ashamed. I've got five kids, and I'm ashamed to have them walk up Yonge Street. When we hear the horror stories about Maple Leaf Gardens — you hear the word "paedophile," but you don't hear a thing about homosexuality, and the reason the Gardens never went to the police, never fired these people is because they were scared of the homosexual community. I've got boys. I don't like to hear what's going on. I want this city cleaned up.

I'm tired of having politicians that cater only to a certain group of people. I'm a family man. I pay my taxes. I was disgusted with the man who was here previous to this lady to tell me in Mississauga it's better. It's not. When you go to all-candidates meetings, you're not allowed to speak like we are here. You have to put it on a note and the mayor controls it. There's rot out there.

I gave you a little piece of paper that was handed to me this morning by my union. Those same people are the ones that are chosen to count the ballots in the city of Toronto. There's a statement there by the great mayor, that she doesn't want to live next to a monster that's going to be created. I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, there's a monster out there in Mississauga. It's controlled by the developers. It's okay for her to have a 200-acre, nice home in Orangeville with 50 racing horses, but when she says she's going to live next door to a monster, I think what she's talking about is the monster in Mississauga.

Still, we do have a problem here in Toronto and if I could quickly just go through my notes, I'm a little bit irritated. I think the Liberals and NDP should stick together with the Conservatives, and let's clean up this mess, please. I just went and did a call the other day and the super said, "George, come on in here." This is 77 Huntley Street. He said: "Look at this. There are three people in this apartment. They're all on welfare." He's got a key to the mailbox: seven welfare cheques to the same unit. What's going on? I complained to politicians. They don't want to hear this.

The important thing here is, when we talk about 100% funding, some person in Michael Harris's government has said, "Hey, there's a lack of accountability," and no incentive for the social workers, the people who administer the welfare, to make sure that only the needy receive it. Go out and take a look. I've spoken to people and they've bragged to me, these homeless. They go with a little receipt from any landlord. All they need is just to take that into the welfare office and they're given \$600-

some-odd, and if they can say they've got a bad back or they're anti-social, it's an extra \$300. That's 100% tax-free.

Have you people ever gone to Crombie Court? A lot of that subsidized housing? These people live better than I do. Why? Is that where our tax dollars are going? The problem is that the politicians do not listen in the city of Toronto. There's a certain group they cater to, and if it's possible, this committee — what would be very important if you want this province to work, and it's about time — like you hear that inmates in the penitentiary have a right to vote. Why? Who has done this? I think landlords, homeowners, businesses should have more say in what politicians we put in power. Why not?

Why should people who are on welfare have a right to vote when they're milking the system? They could have a partial vote. We go to Jack Layton down there, and Olivia Chow. Mostly it's high-rise buildings. I'm talking about commercial. It's a few people that vote them in and it's welfare people. They cater to this group of people.

I hope this committee hurries this thing up. When I read this thing, like the last person here in the book says, "Let's give it another chance. Let's give it more time." There's no time. Take a walk down Yonge Street. See our kids, the drugs, the dopes. It's terrible and it's disgusting. We've failed our children.

I highly commend Michael Harris and Minister Leach, I think it is, for being so responsive and caring. One suggestion I give to him is like a movie with Clint Eastwood. Clint Eastwood walks into this room and there was the bad guy in the bathtub taking a nice little bubble bath. A confrontation: The bad guy had a gun underneath the water and Clint Eastwood noticed this thing and shot him. Clint Eastwood said, "If you're going to shoot, shoot. But you can't do both things at the same time."

I think we better stop our talking and get the work done, because there's a lot of work to be done out there. The most important thing I'd like to leave is that I confronted my colleagues and I said to them — this is the last; I apologize — "If the ministry or anyone is offered a salary increase to \$200,000 or more, is that going to make you go out and do your job?" The answer is no. There's no incentive, and that's the problem with our civil servants and politicians. There has to be an incentive.

When I talk about the rot that set in, it was when the Liberals with Peterson took over. We had two systems; we had two councillors in a ward. The reason it worked so well was that one councillor or both, each one would try to get as many votes and once he got elected in there, he would be appointed to Metro and get an extra \$12,000. There was always this little jousting and working hard. Now that the Peterson government said, "Hey, we can have another tiered system," these councillors don't care and most of them — once you get elected you are all politicians. You know your name carries you through. You can do nothing and you get carried through.

That's what I'm saying: Let's bring some incentives in this Bill 103. There's nothing there for the politicians. If I may add, the other important thing is for the politicians, and I brought this thing out in another committee, now that we are going to have a reduction they have to go out

and see the people, have public meetings. They have to be mandatory. Right now, their job is part-time and I know a lot of politicians who only show up once a week.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Aregers. We've run out of time.

2040

### JEREMY GAUTHIER

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Jeremy Gauthier, please. Good evening, Mr Gauthier, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Jeremy Gauthier:** Thanks to the committee for hearing me. It is my belief that the real common sense revolution is what has arisen in response to the Harris Tory megacity proposal. My opposition to this bill and its linked mega-legislation is threefold.

First, it is underhanded, undemocratic and contemptuous to present such overwhelming revision as a fait accompli without either prior direct allusion to it in the election campaign or serious public consultation, and since Mr Leach says the bill goes ahead regardless of what is said here, these hearings are not serious public consultation.

Second, I believe the fire-sale urgency driving this legislation is political sleight of hand intended to distract from the government's real agenda.

Third, the legislation itself is ill thought out and will have a huge negative impact on Toronto and the neighbouring cities and borough, and ultimately the repercussions will hurt the entire province.

Let me expand on these in reverse order. The proponents of megacity suggest that this unification will improve efficiency and reduce costs, at least in part by eliminating redundant politicians. The reality is that fewer politicians representing larger constituencies will have less time for individuals and individual communities. Moreover, their election expenses will increase, thus obliging them to spend more of their diminished time in drumming up the bucks for the next go-round. Did you know, for instance, that the average California congressman has to bring in \$10,000 every day he's in office to finance his re-election campaign? How much time do you think he has left at the end of the day for the people? Is this the direction we want to go in?

Megacity proponents counter that there are provisions for neighbourhood committees, but this is pure cynicism. Are we supposed to believe that this new mega-government, made by and in the image of the Harris Tories, is supposed to do not as they do but as they say? The Harris Tories don't want to listen to Torontonians now. Why should the mega-bosses?

Even more troubling is the imbalance between urban and suburban interests that will result from megacity. North York is not Scarborough, nor vice versa, but the differences in types of community among the various suburbs, the so-called 905 belt, is much less than the differences between those suburbs and the dense, polyglot cosmopolitan centre that is Toronto.

The megacity bill will profoundly shift the balance of power in favour of those who are car-dependent, and this is absolutely unacceptable. The two most anti-communitarian, widely commoditized technologies in existence are

the television inside the home and the car outside of it. Never mind the pollution aspect; the car is responsible for dangerous, destructive and unsustainable land use patterns. It is hugely subsidized by the taxpayer and the megacity will only exacerbate this trend, not reverse it. If the Harris Tories were true conservatives they would find the gumption to make the car start paying its own way, but I won't hold my breath for that one.

What about other cost-efficiencies? Virtually every study of a megacity say it will cost more. Only the Harris Tories specifically commissioned audit of their own plan suggests savings, but these are duplicitously presented as hopeful, best-case possibilities and are based on assumptions that cities will do more service-slashing.

What about the tax shuffle? Snatching away education's link of accountability to neighbourhoods and homeowners and substituting for it an increase of 150% of our share of social welfare costs — again, unacceptable. Even the government's hand-picked golden boy, Toronto's own Mr Tiny Perfect David Crombie, had to come out of hiding to decry this move. If it's revenue-neutral, why do we need to do it? Because it will force our municipalities to do the Tories' dirty work, cutting social services in order to balance our annual budget, which by law we are required to do, unlike the province or the feds.

Mr Leach says, "There have been cuts since Christ was a cowboy." Does he mean since never? Christ was a carpenter, and I could accept an analogy that he was a shepherd of souls, but soul cowboy number one, I don't think so. But to address what I take to be Mr Leach's point, if we are going to talk about what's been happening since time immemorial, people come from the small towns, the outlying regions, to make their fortunes in the big city. Not all of them succeed, but they usually stay in the cities because they don't want to lose face and because, bad as it may be here, there's even less for them back home. So the towns effectively offload a liability and now they'll get to ignore it completely.

I always thought welfare was that we all agree to put into the pot for those who need it. The effect of this aspect of legislation, which I understand may not actually be part of Bill 103 — but let's be honest: Megaweek was a cynical and calculated attempt to overwhelm the opposition, just as the omnibus legislation was a year ago, legislation which I believe paved the way for Bill 103. I haven't had the time to consider it all in detail. Who has? That's the point. That's very deliberate. That's the Harris Tory style, keeping the rug pulled out from under our feet. Well, we may not know what's hitting us, but we sure know whom to hit back in two years.

That's another thing about this legislation: It appeals to small-town Ontario resentment of the Big Smoke. If they had pitched the megacity in the election platform, they might have won a minority government, but it would have made the division between Toronto and the rest of the province as sharp as a knife. So this is a chance to put the boots to old T.O. Talk about cutting off one's nose to spite one's face. Tell you what: If you're so eager to roll Toronto up into one big ball, why don't you just fill out our application to become the province of

Toronto, mail it to the feds and then crawl to somebody else's door when the money runs out? Because we'll be all right, Mike.

That's what this is about. The real reason for this legislation, bringing me to my second point, is to pay for the tax cut. I ask this government, if you do not proceed with the megacity and the welfare for education tax switch, can you deliver on the irresponsible promise you used to buy the election? It's sure nice to think we're paying too much tax, but the reality is, regardless of any wrong-headedness of the tax structures or what they are used for, we in the west and/or the north or however you want to term our corner of the global economy, are vastly overconsuming far more than our share of the world's wealth. Yes, we all can expect some downward changes in lifestyle, but this isn't the way to bring them about.

Try a Pigovian tax; that is, the tax proposed by French economist Nicholas Pigou, who realized that so long as the prices of goods and services do not reflect all costs assessable to them, such as the costs of pollution, recycling, welfare costs, unfair labour practices etc, as well as the costs the manufacturer is prepared to pay, plus the profit, until all costs are included, the marketplace is dysfunctional and gives rise to abuse, corruption and unsustainable development.

His tax would stand in for those costs and then we'd see who'd bought cars or products from the maquiladora or China. Mother Nature doesn't forget those costs and in response to those who challenge environmentalists with the observation that progress and technology are natural processes, I say yes, and nature has no morality, no compassion and cares not if we choose to live so gracelessly that we make our planet fit only for cockroaches. Fine, the cockroaches will get it anyway, sooner or later.

Why is all this being rushed on through so darned fast? Why does Mr Leach say that this is Toronto's last chance to do this? Why must it be done before the next municipal election? Isn't there going to be another one? Does he know something he's not telling us? Where's the fire, Al?

The Harris Tories are politically canny. They are doing as much as they can, as fast as they can. To be fair, that way they'll have time to make adjustments in the latter part of their term as they have to start sprinkling sugar on the re-election path. If they tried to do this the year before the election, we'd kill them. You remember the last bunch of Tories who tried to panic the public into taking a pill that was too big and too bitter to swallow? That was Charlottetown and there are only two of those clowns left. You want to do something really fast? Say, "Harris Tory" fast enough, and you know what? You're history.

Now we're ready for the first point: Why didn't the Harris Tories tell us they were going to do this when they were campaigning? If they had, they wouldn't have won a single seat in the entire GTA, that's why. They didn't have the strength of character to be honest. In a few days, when the results of the plebescite are in, we'll see if they really are so self-assured that they try to go against Toronto just because they think they can.

A week ago, there was an informational megacity meeting coordinated by the Regent Park Community Association. They had planned the meeting weeks in

advance and had asked their representative, Al Leach, to be there. However, they were turned down because he claimed to already have a commitment elsewhere. Then at the last minute, Leach's riding association cobbles together a pro-megacity rally, and hey, presto, there's Al. But it didn't do him any good since it was substantially attended by challengers of the megacity and there weren't any supporters to speak of.

A representative of the riding association, however, claims that this is no indication of a real lack of support because, so he says, he knows the supporters and they all have lives, they all have families and can't take the time to come out. This is absolutely abhorrent. This cretin, this representative of the nannied class, this toady, has the audacity, the stuck-up ignorance to infer that those of us who have made the time to speak up for what we believe in don't have lives. We're just a bunch of welfare cheats and ne'er-do-wells cluttering up his rosy vision. Why won't we just go away? What's next? "Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?"

Wake up. This is an ugly cycle. The existence of poverty highlights the selfishness and inadequacy of the wealthy whose self-doubt must be denied to avoid self-loathing, so an emotional rationalization transfers and transforms it into contempt for the poor, and a government supported by the wealthy then echoes this contempt, lending it a veneer of establishment approval.

John Ralston Saul points out that the élite have forgotten the single most important consideration for their continued existence: that so long as most of us have nearly enough, the wealthy few can enjoy their privileges relatively untroubled. However, the more of us there are with not nearly enough, the more of us there are with very little left to lose. This is the seed of violent revolution.

This government has repeatedly demonstrated a tremendous contempt for those who oppose it, and Mr Leach was specifically found in contempt of the Legislature and therefore of us all, for spending tax dollars on propaganda, on misinformation proclaiming the megacity a done deal. In a sense, he's being more frank than perhaps is politic, but I have to ask, why does he still have a cabinet post? He has the gall to suggest that Sewell's people, whoever they are — I am not one inasmuch as I have never been to one of those meetings — but apparently, Propaganda Al believes they are stacking the deck at these hearings. He just carries on because unlike Bob Rae's gang nobody here is worried about being spotless. To paraphrase Lily Tomlin as Ernestine the operator: "We don't care. We don't have to. We're the government."

For my part, I think this is the most critical moment in their term of office. As John Sewell observed —

**The Vice-Chair:** Mr Gauthier, I'm sorry, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up your comments. We've come to the end of your time available.

**Mr Gauthier:** I've come to the end of my page; I'm wrapping up.

We who are opposed to megacity need to find a compromise that can allow the government to proceed without losing face. Here's my proposal: Give the Toronto region, because it must be the entire region from

Oshawa to Hamilton, 18 months to come up with our own restructuring and unification plan. Then let the public choose which they prefer in a true referendum.

The people of Toronto do not support Bill 103. The courts have just ruled that it is undemocratic and illegal. If this government proceeds in spite of overwhelming opposition, then I say it's time for the Toronto tea party.

2050

### JOHN GELL

**The Vice-Chair:** John Gell is next. Good evening and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr John Gell:** Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the standing committee and honourable members of the public. That's an awfully hard one to follow. That was wonderful. Wow. I think this is wonderful, seeing citizens come out like this and say these things. Someone said earlier there's a silver lining in this whole thing, the way people are suddenly getting together and talking about everything.

My name is John Gell. I am an old-time resident of the city of York. Some of you might know my mother, Mrs Florence Gell. She was very active in the Conservative Party for a long time. She's still alive. I'm a local historian. I've been looking into the Lambton Park area and surrounding communities, trying to understand the way the communities developed, the vitality of community life and what's happened since then.

Everybody on the committee here knows that a lot of the historic communities are very dispirited now. Walk around the Junction or Weston or along Eglinton in the city of York, along Jane Street. Our communities, which used to be such vibrant places, are very dispirited. It's amazing, in the sad, tired old city of York, how many people are turning out now to fight for York. East York's got a huge campaign going, and bless them for that, but the city of York? Who would have thought that anybody would fight for it. Part of it is people are so disillusioned with their local councils that have let them down time and time again that some people won't fight for local government now. Yet the overwhelming majority do.

I've been going around. I've been trying to find the origin of all the street names and the history of the local churches and all the local stories — anything that will get people talking about the community and coming together like they used to in the old days. You know all those links that used to hold a community together have been snapped, one by one. This is the way it's gone and now the community is plagued by social problems. We have street prostitution — very visible along Jane Street, along Dundas Street, down into Warren Park. We've got a lot of drugs at the corner of Jane and Woolner. We had a murder there on Thursday. The whole area had to be cordoned off and so on. At Rockcliffe middle school two students were just arrested there for forcible confinement of another student and for assaulting the student and so on.

We've got all these problems happening and we've got a few community groups now that are forming. They're trying to fight these things back. I have a dream that the Legislature would stop its proceedings and partisanship

and just say that these are the real problems that are happening in Canada today, that local communities are in a lot of trouble, and what could we do, as a board of education or as a municipal council or as the Ontario Legislature or as the federal government of Canada, to help breathe life back into communities, and let that guide all your deliberations. It could be wonderful. I have some ideas about things that could be done too.

But this thing, the megacity — you're better to abolish Metro but certainly keep local government, which people feel an emotional tie and identification with. When I go around and talk to all the oldtimers, to elders, to women, to parents, to community-minded people, to people with deep roots in the community, none of them wants this. None of them wants a megacity at all. It's this movement towards bigness and impersonality that's a real threat.

The last gentleman gave a terrific speech. He was really eloquent and it was well written. Some people keep hinting there's a lot of anger out there. You can almost see the revolution. People are really upset about this because you're tinkering around with intangibles they hold very dear. I don't think we're going to have a revolution. I think you're going to have more apathy and more cynicism. That's the decline of the western world. That's the way it's going.

That's what's going to happen unless you stop right now and say: "We're off on the wrong track. We don't want to make political hay about this." The No campaign has obviously swung public opinion on this. I think you just have to stop and say, "What can we do now to revive our communities?" If you did that, you'd get hundreds of people with suggestions and it wouldn't necessarily cost a lot of money. This is costing a lot of money.

**Mr Len Wood:** Thank you very much for your presentation. It's good to see people come forward and get their views on the record. I understand some of the polls that have been taken agree with what you sense out there, that there's a lot of anger and frustration, people are worried. The Toronto Star and CITY-TV have taken polls saying 75% of Metro residents are opposed to the megacity. The concern that is out there, we had other presenters when I was here last week saying they're worried with all the dumping that is taking place, all the services the province used to deliver — long-term care, nursing homes, all these services — being dumped on to the city at the same time as you're talking about amalgamation.

I just want to know if you want to elaborate further on that. It wasn't talked about during the election campaign. It was promised that it would not happen, they would not demolish the six cities and bring them into one, and now you have 75% of the people who have been polled out there saying that they don't want any part of it. What would be your reaction, to do it over again?

**Mr Gell:** What's your riding, Mr Wood?

**Mr Len Wood:** I'm in Cochrane North, in Kapsukasing.

**Mr Gell:** There's a lot of lingering anger at the NDP still.

**Mr Len Wood:** Not in the north, there's not.

**Mr Gell:** There is in Metropolitan Toronto.

**Mr Len Wood:** That's possible.

**Mr Gell:** At all the political parties. I think people are very suspicious. The Conservatives are plotting their own downfall here. You've got a citizens' movement. Who would have believed you'd have this? The early moves of the Conservatives were fairly popular, but they're bringing about their own downfall. This is the way governments go; they always defeat themselves. People think the Liberals and the NDP will just use this for their own partisan purposes, you see, and once they get in, they'll come out with their hidden agenda which they won't have talked about during the election.

I'm telling you, this is the cynicism of people. Just go around and talk to people. This is the distrust, the cynicism of people now for all the political parties. Who will really listen? I get the impression a lot of you are entrenched in certain positions. What we've got to do is put that partisanship aside and everybody's got to sit down and look at Canada's problems and come up with constructive solutions.

**Mr Len Wood:** I've heard that because of some of the reactions that have been happening — the courts have ruled against the trustees and Leach — some of the reaction that I've heard just walking around Toronto is that the Conservative caucus is considered to be a bunch of bullies in the school yard, where you lob snowballs or objects and then hide. That's the attitude I'm hearing. Are you getting the same reaction from people?

**Mr Gell:** People don't want things imposed. They imposed the amalgamation of Weston on the city of

York. Poor Weston didn't get a say. Now people know how Westeners feel. You know what I mean? Weston resented it and Weston has gone into quite a tailspin since. Other areas have been amalgamated. As East York keeps saying, we've been threatened with amalgamation many times, and we're ready for it.

Setting up and appointing the trustees was a gaffe. They've actually been taking on a supervisory role before the legislation has even been passed. That's the height of arrogance, of course. That's been struck down. But that's not a fundamental criticism of the amalgamation bill, nor should we confuse the two issues, amalgamation and the downloading of social services. You could have amalgamation without the downloading of these services, you could have amalgamation that would save money and I'd still be opposed to it.

**Mr Len Wood:** Amalgamation took place back in the 1970s in my area. I know personally it cost money. It cost big bucks.

**Mr Gell:** Halifax, Dartmouth and other areas, yes.

**Mr Len Wood:** In Kapuskasing, Timmins, all these areas where the amalgamation took place, it cost big bucks.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Gell, for being here this evening. We've run out of time. I appreciate you coming.

I'd like to call upon Harpal Sandhu, please. No? Okay, this committee stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

*The committee adjourned at 2101.*







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Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt ND)

**Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold ND)  
Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North / -Nord ND)  
Mr Paul Jones, manager, local government policy branch,  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

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**Greffière par intérim:** Ms Lisa Freedman

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ISSN 1180-5218

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 36th Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 36<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

Thursday 27 February 1997

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

Jeudi 27 février 1997

**Standing committee on  
general government**

City of Toronto Act, 1996

**Comité permanent des  
affaires gouvernementales**

Loi de 1996 sur la cité de Toronto



Chair: Bart Maves  
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Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



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Toronto ON M7A 1A2

Téléphone, 416-325-7400 ; télécopieur, 416-325-7430

Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
 GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Thursday 27 February 1997

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO  
**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
 AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Jeudi 27 février 1997

*The committee met at 0903 in room 151.*

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1996  
 LOI DE 1996 SUR LA CITÉ DE TORONTO

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to replace the seven existing municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto by incorporating a new municipality to be known as the City of Toronto / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à remplacer les sept administrations municipales existantes de la communauté urbaine de Toronto en constituant une nouvelle municipalité appelée la cité de Toronto.

FRANCES NUNZIATA

**The Chair (Mr Bart Maves):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to Frances Nunziata, the mayor of the city of York. You have half an hour this morning to make your presentation. If there's some time left over at the end of your presentation, I'm going to divide it equally among the caucuses for some questions and comments. Ms Nunziata, you can begin.

**Ms Frances Nunziata:** Good morning, Mr Chairman, members of the committee. I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak to you today on behalf of the council and residents of the city of York. York began as a rural township in 1793 and as such we are the oldest municipality in Metro Toronto and have a population of just over 134,000.

It is unfortunate that over the course of the last few weeks the debate over Bill 103 has been divisive, leaving wounds that will last long after this bill has been passed into law. This is unfortunate but understandable. It is unfortunate because many of us in York and Metro Toronto recognize that the status quo is not acceptable and some form of change is in order. We were, and remain, prepared to sit down and constructively discuss changes to the form and function of our own municipality in a spirit of partnership and cooperation with the province.

I understand the frustration that many have felt with the process surrounding Bill 103. The government has, through its misguided, concurrent proposal to download social service costs to the municipal sector, alienated many of its potential partners while at the same time causing, as the Premier himself said last week, a significant amount of confusion. There are those who believe the significant confusion caused by the entanglement of the two separate issues of amalgamation and downloading to be deliberate. They believe that downloading additional costs to the municipal sector is an attempt to hide the impact of a campaign promise to reduce provincial

income tax by 30%. In any event, there can be no doubt that downloading is wrong for Metro and wrong for York.

While some have argued against any type of change, my position has been, remains and will always be that I'll support any change that is in the best interests of the residents of York. To help us know if that is the case, our council is anxious to receive all the information the province has regarding the financial, service and governance implications of the legislation we have before us.

Metro Toronto MPPs, including the Minister of Municipal Affairs and his parliamentary assistant, all campaigned in the last election advocating the recommendations of the Trimmer report. In fact, the minister himself sat with Mrs Trimmer on her task force. Now that the minister and the government are imposing the opposite of what they campaigned for, I am puzzled, as is Mrs Trimmer, why the government has not released the convincing facts and information available that made them change their collective minds. If this information is not available, then one is left with the only logical conclusion: that this is a ploy designed to hide the true impact of a 30% tax cut.

York wants to make a reasonable and fact-based decision about where our best future lies. But our projections show employers like Kodak paying \$651,346 more in business taxes because of downloading; an average property on Humewood, close to \$1,000 a year; the doughnut shop at Keele and Eglinton which will pay \$3,220 more in taxes. The list goes on and on. If you can provide us with some information that shows these figures are wrong, we need to see it.

We are a well-managed municipality. Costs per household for local government have been the lowest in Metro for three of the last four years. Along with a zero tax increase in the past three years, currently York's costs are the third-lowest among the 30 GTA communities, surpassed only by the very smallest municipalities having minimal civic administrations. York also has a tightly integrated network of community services, public school and adult education programs, along with innovative community economic development programs.

In recent years, York has also become a major immigration reception area for Metro Toronto. While this enhances our cultural richness as a city, this influx is not without its challenges. It has impacted our assessment base and put additional pressure on a number of our social services. Yet our small size has allowed us to quickly adapt to changing circumstances by forming strategic alliances with community and business groups to bring about innovative service delivery.

0910

We have the quickest first response to a fire situation anywhere in Metro; the lowest tonnage cost for recycling, garbage and yard waste collection; and we also have the lowest water rates for high-volume users and the lowest hydro rates in Metro. Contrary to statements that York does not have separate storm and sanitary sewers, more than 55% of York has a separate storm and sanitary sewer system. York also has four arenas, three community centres and three outdoor pools. While maintaining a zero tax increase for the last three years, as I mentioned, our service users have indicated a satisfaction rate exceeding 80%. We have embarked on façade and streetscape improvement programs as part of our infrastructure renewal. Again, our small size has allowed us to more easily facilitate closer partnerships within the community.

CEDAC, York's Community Economic Development Action Group, has been able to put in place programs related to marketing and skills development. For example, we have worked closely with employers such as Redpath to develop a specialty foodservice program that provides valuable marketing and education training for companies in York. To a considerable extent, this has been possible because of the close interaction between community organizations, council and city staff, which in turn helps us to foster our strong sense of community spirit, which in my view is part of the very essence of what we should stand for as a local government.

For example, as mayor one of my main priorities is dealing with the issue of crime in my municipality. Because of the close contact between our neighbourhoods and elected councillors, as mayor I can work closely with these neighbourhoods and develop a rapport with police officers in the community to deal with problems related to prostitution and drugs. That is why one of the main concerns of York residents is that the accessibility, awareness and accountability we presently take for granted will be greatly diminished.

A community must rest on the foundation of more than the numbers at the bottom of a balance sheet. Particularly in an era of what sometimes appears to be a singleminded attack by governments across the country on deficits, the close interdependence we find in York is something I personally value a great deal. Would this be undermined in a megacity? Certainly if Bill 103 is passed, along with downloading, it is a risk that I hope this committee agrees is simply not worth taking.

Let me be clear: I realize that in meeting most challenges in life we sometimes must change and that we sometimes run risks in doing so, but the way ahead for York needs to be a little more stable as we travel down this road of change.

Some people have questioned the viability of York. My answer to those individuals is: Let there be no doubt that our municipality would not be viable, regardless of what borders we have or don't have, in a megacity that faces the huge costs of downloaded provincial services. The delicate social fabric we have woven in York would be ripped apart. As mayor, this renders discussions about amalgamation of any sort a non-starter.

What happens to our communities when a recession hits? How will we be able to help those who cannot help

themselves? Do we end up penalizing the Metro Toronto property taxpayer simply by virtue of the fact that they live here rather than in Mississauga or in North Bay? Will we see increased crime, prostitution and the decay of our infrastructure, as we have in many US cities?

In York, we acknowledge the realities of our relatively low tax base. Staff reductions, consolidation of services and restructuring: These and other cost-saving efficiencies have helped us cope with a limited revenue base. But we realize that York also needs to ready itself for the next century and the challenges of a more competitive, global economy. While the status quo, to us, is not an option, at the same time we want the tools to be able to manage change rather than have change manage us, which is precisely what the downloading exercise will mean for York.

I am also troubled by what the province is saying about its own role when it downloads income redistribution programs and health care costs on to municipalities. First, this is inequitable, because property tax is not based on the ability to pay. But if the province believes program delivery of services that are based on income can be handled by municipal government, then why have a government of Ontario? Why not amalgamate with the province of Manitoba?

As a mayor, I can understand different municipalities having different property standards, service delivery etc. But for certain areas, like welfare and health care, as a citizen of this province I believe these should be equally available across Ontario. But the fortunes and demographics of municipalities will end up determining eligibility, not need. This is where most large US cities are today. A city has to be more than just a business, and so does Queen's Park. A checkerboard system of social service delivery across the province is not the kind of Ontario I want to live in. This is the politics of division, and I urge you to reject that vision.

**Mr Tony Ruprecht (Parkdale):** Mayor Nunziata, first of all, I appreciate that you've come to lucidly describe your position and why the city of York is efficiently run. What I'd like to do is to find out if you can just add a bit more to what you're giving us here on page 5 when you say, "I am puzzled, as is Mrs Trimmer, why the government has not released the convincing facts and information available that made them change their collective minds." Do you have any more information on that? Are there any statistics you know of that the government has? Have you done any research on this that would make you think there is something they're hiding?

**Ms Nunziata:** I don't have any information whatsoever, and that's exactly what we've been trying to get from the government: information. The only information I'm able to bring forward is information my staff has provided on the financial impact on the city of York, but I have not received any information at all. We're trying to get that information. That's what makes it so confusing to the public: They're not sure; they don't understand what's happening. It's only fair then as politicians that we provide information so they understand what their future is. I haven't received any information.

**Mr Mario Sergio (Yorkview):** Mayor Nunziata, thanks for coming and making a presentation to our

committee. As you can see, the hearings have been restricted here to Queen's Park. We had an excellent number of people here, but mainly from the city of Toronto.

Within your own city, how did you reach your people? How did they reach you? How did you get to the 71%? I believe that was the result on the no side. Did they have enough time to get acquainted with the facts? How did you come to this conclusion? How did your people come to this conclusion?

**0920**

**Ms Nunziata:** The 71% was a result that the mayors released yesterday on the Environics poll. I'm very pleased that the response has shifted drastically in the city of York. It was 71% for no and 29% for yes; a month or two ago it was more in the 50s, so it has shifted drastically.

The way we're trying to get the information out to our residents is by public meetings that we're holding. We're also sending out literature to try to explain to the residents what this means. The province obviously is not doing that, because there isn't any information other than the commercials we hear on the radio and TV. People are totally confused. What the province has lacked in this whole process is consultation, and it hasn't provided the proper information. We're trying to do what we can with the information we have, but unfortunately we don't have all the information the province has. I'm sure they have information that they refuse to release publicly.

**Mr Sergio:** Do you feel the residents of York have had enough, let's say, through the efforts you have made and the newspapers, radio and television? Do you think they have learned enough about what the bill contains, or would you like to see some more time?

**Ms Nunziata:** Definitely more time, because they're very confused. They need more time to absorb the information that has been distributed to them. They've only had three weeks to try to understand and absorb any information that's been sent out to them. Because there seems to be different information being handed out to residents that is contradicting figures out there, they need much more time. That is exactly what I'm getting from my residents in York. Even the people who originally did support the amalgamation are saying: "No, it's happening too fast. Slow down. Let us understand what's happening. You can't rush this bill through just in a few weeks to have it in effect for the November municipal election. Slow down." That's what I'm hearing from my residents. They need more time, because there are a lot of people who don't understand it, and a lot of people are going to be voting no because they don't understand it.

**Mr John L. Parker (York East):** You mentioned that the status quo is not an option. Frankly, we hear a lot of that. It's quite rare that anyone comes before this committee and says, "We like the status quo." Most people are saying, "We need change." What change do you want?

**Ms Nunziata:** We definitely need change. The status quo is not working. As you know, with the mayors' proposal we presented, unfortunately we only had 21 days to present that. I'm not happy with the full proposal we brought forward, because I think there was a lot more we could have worked on if given enough time on it.

I'd like to see change. Particularly in York, there could be a lot of services amalgamated. There could be a lot of services amalgamated with other municipalities without eliminating the local municipalities. Given the opportunity, I think the various municipalities can work together and amalgamate some of the services where there is duplication, because I believe there is duplication. If we had more time, we could work as a partner and implement those changes without just eliminating municipalities, as this province is proceeding with.

**Mr Parker:** You say there are some services that should be amalgamated. What services are amalgamated under Bill 103 that you think should not be amalgamated?

**Ms Nunziata:** With Bill 103 you're amalgamating all the services.

**Mr Parker:** Which ones shouldn't be amalgamated?

**Ms Nunziata:** I don't believe that the local services the politicians are providing now to their constituents should be amalgamated.

**Mr Parker:** Which ones are those?

**Ms Nunziata:** The community services, the roads, the parks. I think the bylaws should not be amalgamated, because each municipality has various bylaws, has different bylaws. I don't think the bylaws should be amalgamated at all, because every municipality has different needs.

**Mr Parker:** When the minister announced Bill 103, he mentioned the concept of community councils, where the new council would be subdivided into clusters of councillors who would be responsible for particular communities and the local concerns of those communities. Where do you see that this fails to address the need to address local concerns that you're suggesting?

**Ms Nunziata:** I don't think that addresses the concerns of residents in particular in York — I can speak only on York — because the representation from the local councillors would be — in York now we have very small wards. The largest ward in York is 27,000 and the smallest is 10,000, and we have eight councillors. Having a representative for 50,000, I don't think the politicians would be accountable and accessible to the residents in York.

**Mr Parker:** So you think we should amalgamate all the services except for roads, bylaws and parks and we should keep a large number of local councillors to administer those three items?

**Ms Nunziata:** No, I didn't say that. I think what you should amalgamate, what I agree with, is the fire department, the ambulance.

**Mr Parker:** Ambulances are already amalgamated. I'm sorry, I'll give my time to my friends.

**Ms Nunziata:** No, amalgamate them with the fire department.

**Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke-Rexdale):** Mayor Nunziata, since your thesis is that the status quo isn't acceptable and you want change, don't you really endorse the status quo, from what you're saying? You have said that for the total six, plus the big Metro, amalgamation is out.

**Ms Nunziata:** I didn't say the big Metro.

**Mr Hastings:** You want to get rid of Metro, I presume.

**Ms Nunziata:** Yes.

**Mr Hastings:** Do you still endorse then every proposal in the mayors' paper back in late November? It would get rid of Metro and take all these services — building and licensing would be assigned to East York, I believe, and works would be assigned to Etobicoke for the whole Metro road situation. Scarborough would do something else. Do you still endorse that proposal, since you've signed the document?

**Ms Nunziata:** Yes, I did sign the document. But I must admit, and I am sure all the other mayors admit as well, that it wasn't perfect.

**Mr Hastings:** We weren't asking for perfection. Do you still endorse that document?

**Ms Nunziata:** What I am saying is that the mayors' proposal, even though the Metro licensing would have been East York, was not to say that the delivery would be in East York. The office would be situated in East York. That's what the mayors' proposal was. The local municipalities would still be delivering the service. They would just have one area.

0930

**Mr Tony Silipo (Dovercourt):** Mayor Nunziata, thank you for being here. I apologize for missing the beginning of your presentation. I wanted to just pick up on this discussion we've been having around what the alternatives are to the status quo. Like you, I didn't think the mayors' report was perfect, but compared to Bill 103 it's a lot better than what I see in front of me in Bill 103.

It seems to me that essentially what you and the other mayors were saying through that report is (a) that there was a willingness to make change and (b) that there was a way to find savings in the delivery of services locally within Metropolitan Toronto in a way that also maintained that important link between the citizens and their local government. To me, that seemed to be a very key point. Again, I disagreed with a number of pieces of it, but those essential points, it seems to me, were there.

I'd like to ask you a little bit more about the process, in terms of this change, because you talked about that a little bit as well and the frustration you and many citizens are feeling around the way in which this bill is being done. We've had a situation now in which the government's actions have been found to be inappropriate, first, by the Speaker in terms of the flyer and, secondly, by the courts a couple of days ago. Presumably, if the polls are right, and I believe they are, next week will be the third blow, the third ruling if you will, against the government, through the referendum results.

Do you think that at that point it would be appropriate, it would be incumbent on the government to say: "Okay, we didn't get this one right. We need to stop. We need to withdraw the bill. We need to then engage in a serious process of discussion that looks at what the options might be in terms of the GTA, in terms of local governance within that, and try to come up within a sensible period of time with some alternatives and some solutions that really engage people"? Is that your sense, as the mayor of York, about what it is that people are actually talking about and saying as they are getting ready to say no in the referendum?

**Ms Nunziata:** Yes, exactly. The residents in York recognize that the referendum vote is non-binding, but I

am going to tell you this campaign is unlike any election I have ever experienced. Usually in an election you try to go out to your residents and ask for support. On this particular referendum, on this vote, people are actually coming to me and telling me how they're going to vote. People are so interested in this election and they're afraid of what will happen if they don't vote on this referendum, even though the province will not take the response seriously, which I find very shocking. I find it difficult that this government could ignore 2.4 million people when it's the people who elected them to office in the first place. I've never heard any politician say, "I don't care what the residents say." They have to at least take them seriously and listen to them.

What the residents are saying is: "Please slow down. Let's work together. Let's get all the information and go into the process and if you can prove to me that I will be saving tax dollars" — they want a reduction in taxes and unless you can provide them a tax reduction, or prove to them that eventually they will benefit financially, why amalgamate? Why take away our local government? Why take away our local politicians who are accessible and accountable to us? Why are you taking that away from us? What will happen is that eventually the residents will be so far removed from their local politicians, their taxes are going to go up. They're very afraid of that.

You're right, Tony. They're asking for the government to please reconsider and give them some time to absorb what's happening and all the information and phase it in. If it doesn't happen in this municipal election, do it in the next municipal election. I realize it's too close to the government's election, but that's a risk you'll have to take, if you're right.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mayor Nunziata, for coming forward and making your presentation this morning.

#### BRIAN BURCH

**The Chair:** Would Brian Burch please come forward? Good morning, Mr Burch. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes this morning to make your presentation.

**Mr Brian Burch:** I'd like to thank the members of the committee for providing me with an opportunity to address you in regard to a very serious issue, which is the destructive piece of legislation known as Bill 103. If I duplicate some of the submissions made by earlier speakers, I trust that the members of the committee will realize that opposition to the bill is based on some very commonsense assumptions. I hope that I will be able to plant some seeds of inspiration that will change the minds of Tory members of the Legislature. I have been advised to try to be polite and respectful to the members of this committee in order to ensure that my views will be given respect. What follows is the best I can do to heed such advice.

There are likely a few people on the committee who are unaware of my background. I am one of the people you might have seen on Wednesdays participating in the interfaith vigil for social justice and compassion, which has been going on in front of the Legislature every Wednesday since November 1995 in an effort to draw

attention to the suffering the Tory agenda has caused the people of Ontario. As I am sure the security people have informed you — and they have come and spoken to me already — I am also one of the people arrested for trying to plant a symbolic garden in front of Mike Harris's window to bring attention to the growing hunger in Ontario.

I might remind the Legislature that Judge Bentley ruled that such protests were not only to be permitted but encouraged. This reminder is especially important if the members of the Legislature do not wish to listen to more traditional forms of opposition. I am here partly to convince myself that one does not have to step outside the traditional path of citizen participation in order to be heard by the government. If the government of Ontario does not listen to the massive outpouring of opposition to the forced amalgamation of Metro Toronto by withdrawing Bill 103, it will be stating in unequivocal terms that extraparliamentary opposition is the only way for dissenting views to be heard. I hope my cynicism is not justified.

Toronto is my home by adoption. I grew up just outside of Sault Ste Marie and, like a lot of people, have found that Toronto is a much more tolerant, compassionate and diverse community than my home town. It has been a place where I have been able to meet with Mayor Barb Hall, Metro councillor Jack Layton or city councillor Pam McConnell whenever it was important to do so. I have worked in Etobicoke and in Scarborough, finding that they are distinct cities with a different approach to issues than that of downtown Toronto.

Our current municipal structure works well and does not need improvement or change. The fact that there are significant reserve funds in the Metro area that the province of Ontario wishes to control indicates that there are no real financial problems in the governance of Metro Toronto. I have not been frustrated by possible confusion over divisions of power and jurisdiction within Metro Toronto, or indeed between the federal and provincial levels of government for that matter. I have always felt that my local elected officials are my local elected officials. I do not want to have my voice in the life of my city diluted by the arbitrary fiat of a government that has been breaking promises and contracts since the day it was elected.

I do not make an artificial distinction between Bill 103 and the other parts of the legislative agenda of the Harris government. My representation provincially has been diluted by reducing the number of legislators. The omnibus bill centralized decision-making in the hands of cabinet ministers in a frightening fashion, reminiscent of the various enabling pieces of legislation in Germany in 1933. From anti-labour legislation to breaking contracts with provincially supported housing cooperatives, the government of Ontario has been systematically removing support for those aspects of civil society that permit me to help control my life, community and environment. Bill 103 is a continuation of an anti-democratic series of actions by legislators who do not seem to believe in the rights of citizens to participate in the decisions that affect their own lives.

There is some strange assumption floating around that having fewer elected politicians will mean less interfer-

ence in personal lives. This is a false libertarianism embraced by segments within the Tory party. Fewer politicians do not mean less government. It means that what is currently being done by government can more easily be turned over to individuals to personally profit by. It means that the ability of the electorate to have a say in the policies that govern us is weakened. It does not mean less government; it means a for-profit government far out of the hands of the average citizen.

I hold the government of Ontario responsible for the confusion around municipal voting lists and the way that the various plebiscites across Metro Toronto are being held. The voters lists are provided to the various cities and borough of Metro Toronto by the provincial government. It is Al Leach, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, who is ultimately responsible for the accuracy of the lists. It was his legislation that changed the way municipal plebiscites, referenda and elections are held. Al Leach is ultimately responsible for any confusion around their accuracy, secrecy and validity. I look forward to an announcement by Al Leach stating that he is taking full responsibility for the problems that his portfolio has caused, ensuring that he has publicly and ultimately taken responsibility for what has been going on.

I was angered that the province would appoint an unaccountable body of trustees to interfere in the operations and functions of the governments of Metro Toronto. Even if amalgamation were to be forced upon the city of Toronto and all the cities and the borough that make up Metro Toronto, the removal of the power of an elected and representative body is inexcusable in a democracy. Even if, as announced yesterday, Bill 103 may be amended so that decisions may be appealed to Divisional Court, they still can interfere with the decision-making ability of a democratically elected body that they are not accountable to, and that is unacceptable.

#### 0940

I was not surprised that the courts struck down the appointment of the trustees. It was surprising, however, to read that the Tory government tried to justify its actions on the basis of the remnant of royal prerogative. What arrogance, yet how revealing: 150 years after the rebellion of 1837-38 we have a government trying to act like the Family Compact and oppose responsible government. Bill 103 is a retreat from the ongoing evolutionary development of responsible government, a retreat I cannot support.

It is not just to the Tory MPPs that I am addressing my comments. I urge the opposition members, whether the independent Peter North or the members of the Liberal and NDP caucuses, to use not only every parliamentary means but also extraparliamentary means to block the passage of this bill. We have seen the example of Alvin Curling, whose defiance of the more gentle traditions of the Legislature forced the hearings on the omnibus bill. All members of the Legislature have the responsibility to help preserve democracy and citizen control in Metro Toronto and the other centres faced with forced amalgamation.

Yes, I know there are those who feel that there should be a compromise worked out in the taking away of our democratic traditions. One suggestion raised has been

keeping the existing cities but cutting the total number of elected politicians across Metro down to the Tory proposal of 44 councillors. I am reminded of a passage in George Orwell's 1984:

"For the moment he had shut his ears to the remoter noises and was listening to the stuff that streamed out of the telescreen. It appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to 20 grams a week. And only yesterday, he reflected, it had been announced that the ration was to be reduced to 20 grams a week. Was it possible that they could swallow that, after only 24 hours? Yes, they swallowed it. Parsons swallowed it easily, with the stupidity of an animal. The eyeless creature at the other table swallowed it fanatically, passionately, with a furious desire to track down, denounce, and vaporize anyone who should suggest that last week the ration had been 30 grams."

The people of this city are not going to be satisfied with cutting our ration of democracy. We will not gather in the streets to shout, "Thank you, Al Leach, for raising our democracy ration to 44 elected officials." If Bill 103 goes through, in whole or in part, we will work to make sure that the Metro Days of Action look like a Tory convention. To paraphrase our sisters in South Africa, you have struck the middle class and you have struck a rock.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Burch, for your presentation. You've exhausted your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this morning.

#### WILLIAM LARDNER

**The Chair:** Will William Lardner please come forward. Good morning, Mr Lardner. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr William Lardner:** Mr Chairman and members of the committee, my name is William Lardner. I am part-owner of a construction company based in Thornhill. We do much of our business in the Metropolitan Toronto and GTA areas.

I'm also a resident of Don Mills and in the past I've been a resident of the city of Toronto and the city of Scarborough. I came here in 1952 and I've lived through the earlier amalgamations that resulted in the present municipal structure of our area.

We now need a new, amalgamated Toronto. It's just the next step in an evolving political and administrative structure, and it may not be the last as we look into the future. With each of the earlier amalgamations I've lived through, we heard exactly the same cries of woe that you've just heard and prophecies of impending disaster that we hear from Mr Sewell and all his acolytes. But the sky will not fall. If there is administrative dislocation, it's going to be more than compensated for by the cleaning out of outdated bylaws and regulations that have piled up like so many unused and unread files in a dusty attic.

When the police forces were amalgamated, we heard the same complaints from the police chiefs that we now hear from the fire chiefs. But anybody who remembers the sloppy and ill-disciplined forces run by some of our earlier municipalities — and they were sloppy — will agree that we've clearly exchanged inefficiency and poor

control for a very well-run and immeasurably better-trained police force than we had in the early 1950s.

Planning and building department controls in Metro are far too cumbersome. Cities vary in interpretations of regulations and controls. They vary their interpretation of simple engineering facts. Frequently, one building in one block will require permits for virtually the same work from both Metro and one of the lesser municipalities. Each will have its totally different way of evaluating the work to be done and totally different rules about the way it's to be done. It's another area where there will be savings not only directly in the staff but also in the elimination of red tape.

There's also a significant difference in efficiency between the municipalities. North York, for example, in my experience is relatively efficient and has its red tape under reasonable control. Smaller municipalities are less well organized, in some cases very badly organized, and very poorly administered in the matter of engineering control. The city of Toronto has good controls, but it's cumbersome and expensive to work with.

I have one suggestion to make to Mr Leach for consideration. I understand that under the current proposals the new community councils may be given the responsibility for recommending engineering standards within their individual community. This I'm afraid could create the same balkanization that we suffer from today. I'd suggest to Mr Leach that engineering standards should be set by the new city and should apply uniformly across the whole of that new city.

My last comment is that the government of Ontario, in my view, has demonstrated a determination to produce more efficient and politically responsible municipal government. For Metro, it's clear that its goal is to ensure Toronto's continuing vitality and international competitiveness. We should have some confidence that Mike Harris will pursue that goal objectively. I for one have no doubt that as adjustments to the initial plans are needed, Harris will have the determination and the guts to make the necessary changes.

Thank you for listening to my submission.

**Mr David Turnbull (York Mills):** Mr Lardner, in your opinion was it your impression in the last election that the present government ran on a platform that it was going to eliminate duplication and wastage in government at all levels that it had control over?

**Mr Lardner:** Yes. I voted for this government and that was a major factor in my decision. They identified an area that really needed attention and I think they're addressing it. This is well within their mandate.

**Mr Turnbull:** There has been a suggestion that somehow the government is moving in a way that it hadn't signalled to the electorate.

**Mr Silipo:** Joyce Trimmer seems to think so.

**Mr Turnbull:** Perhaps you could comment a little more in depth as to what you consider the aspects of this debate.

*Interjections.*

**The Chair:** Order, please, gentlemen.

**Mr Turnbull:** Perhaps in view of the talk from across the floor, I will add that I sat on the Trimmer commission and with the exception of the fact that we are going to

one single government in Metro, it was quite clear that we are substantially implementing the recommendations of the Trimmer commission, of which I was a member.

**Mr Silipo:** That's not what your report says.

**Mr Turnbull:** You're wrong, sir.

**The Chair:** Order.

0950

**Mr Lardner:** I really think we've had this debate in one form or another now extending over several years. We've had a number of reports — the Trimmer report, the Golden report — and all of them have contributed significantly, I think, to evaluating what needs to be done.

Now, as I see it, we have quite a clear course set. There may be some problems that have to be sorted out as you go along, because you can't look into the future and pin down all the details that have to be got right, but anyone who's been in the business of creating something, whether it's a new political system or a business or whatever, knows that fundamentally your objective has got to be clear and you've got to work all the way towards getting to that objective. You find always that there are factors perhaps that you haven't considered or other factors come up that you couldn't possibly have considered. You have to adjust to those.

The thing is that the objective was very clearly set out, I thought, by Harris and the Tories before they started, and that is more efficient government. I am convinced that they have that objective absolutely as their guide. It's the best interests of Toronto that they have in mind and I have a lot of confidence that that's what they're going to achieve, even if they do have to make some minor changes along the way.

**Mr Turnbull:** We have indeed expressed the view that we are prepared to amend. Even before the committee process was called we allowed for, first of all, a considerable amount of time in committee and in addition to that, at the Premier's expressed wish, we have also committee of the whole, which will allow for amendments right up to the last moment before third reading is completed.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** Perhaps, Mr Lardner, I could just get your comments about another important aspect of what's involved in the premise behind this bill. You note in your presentation outdated bylaws. I don't know if you're aware there are 180,000 bylaws between the seven cities. You're involved in construction. Would you tell us whether that duplication you mention has had an impact on the cost of doing business and, as a corollary to that, whether that's been a disincentive for people to invest in Metro Toronto.

**Mr Lardner:** First of all, it definitely creates an additional cost. Quite frequently, particularly when we're getting into areas of new technology and so on, it's necessary to spend a great deal of time with people from the different municipalities who are charged with the responsibility of approving plans and so on to bring them up to speed on the new technology. Often there's a great deal of resistance to this sort of change, so you have to spend a lot of time, really, in education.

Then, of course, there's the simple duplication of paperwork. For example, when you have to have approval from both the Metro works department and, say, the city

of Toronto works department to put tie-backs under a street, obviously you're getting an extra six or seven copies of this or that distributed, a lot more paper and so on.

**The Chair:** Mr Lardner, I'm sorry to interrupt, but we've come to the end of your allotted time. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward this morning to make your presentation.

## KEVIN BRILLINGER

**The Chair:** Would Kevin Brillinger please come forward. Good morning, Mr Brillinger. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Kevin Brillinger:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I'm delighted to have this opportunity to address the committee today. Please let me start off by saying I strongly support Bill 103 and the concept of an amalgamated city of Toronto. I want to do my best to convince people that it's in the best interests of all Toronto residents to proceed with the implementation of this bill.

My name is Kevin Brillinger. I'm 40 years old. I work in the franchise industry and eight of our franchise transmission repair businesses are located within Metropolitan Toronto boundaries. I live at 97 Lord Seaton Road. It's in an area known as St Andrews in the York Mills section of Willowdale, which is part of the city of North York and the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

That's a real mouthful to describe where I live. I take a great deal of pride in my community, but if someone from outside the boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto asks me where I live, I usually say I live in Toronto. If I diligently employ my postal code, mail addressed to my house gets there whether it's says Willowdale, North York or Toronto. I live in Toronto; we all live and work in Toronto. Any way you look at it, denial of that statement is really pretty futile. We take pride in our local communities but we live in Toronto as far as the rest of Ontario, Canada and the world is concerned, and I don't know why Torontonians can't accept that.

I believe communities will thrive and survive in the new city of Toronto when it's established. We can have our cake and eat it too. There are those who would have us believe municipal government is the saviour and only salvation for neighbourhoods and community spirit. I have to disagree with that to the extreme. People create neighbourhoods and communities, not government, not 100 councillors. The people create the communities and the neighbourhoods that we live in.

In my family's situation, my wife is the president of the local ratepayers' association. I participate in the local riding association, I volunteer, I coach hockey in the house league at the select level, I coach baseball. My daughter participates in Sparks; my son participates in Cubs. We have a very strong home and school association in the area in which I live. These are the elements that go into building a neighbourhood, not having two councillors to serve that neighbourhood.

We're fortunate to have an extremely effective and responsive local councillor in our area. I've never had occasion to speak to the Metro councillor in the 10 years I've lived in York Mills. It's nice to know we have two

councillors to represent our interests, but is it absolutely necessary? Bill 103 proposes one councillor for every 44,000 people, approximately. I noticed in the paper yesterday that Toronto city councillor Peter Tabuns defended his office overspending based on the fact that he had 46,000 residents to represent in his riding. It seems that 44,000 is pretty much right on the mark for the representation that we should have.

There are five compelling reasons that I support amalgamation. As has been stated time and again, I believe it's a natural evolution. I wasn't yet born in 1953 when there were 13 communities, but it seems like the evolution in 1965 to six communities went okay, and I think in 1997 we're ready to call the city of Toronto what it is, one city with all the people that live here. It's obvious, when 70% of Metro services are already consolidated, that consolidating the balance of the 30% is not a huge step and is a natural evolution.

The second compelling reason I see for amalgamation is one council and one mayor to represent the interests of all the residents of Toronto. Toronto, in my view, is the engine that drives the Canadian economy, and we're losing touch with that fact. We're having businesses flee the metropolitan boundaries. In our case, trying to operate small businesses, the overwhelming load in taxes and paperwork is driving the small business man to distraction in the course of trying to create wealth and build jobs in our metropolitan community. I believe if we have one voice, one council, one mayor to represent our interests in Ottawa, Queen's Park and the rest of the world, it's of huge benefit for all the residents of Toronto.

That leads into the third reason that I think we need to amalgamate the various municipalities in Toronto. We'd have a better-coordinated development pitch for the rest of the world. Right now we have six different development offices going after the businesses that we need to rebuild the tax base in Metropolitan Toronto. It's too confusing for business. We need one consolidated effort to attract business to our metropolitan area.

I guess everyone has had a knock at the cost savings, but to me it's just abundantly obvious that 45 elected officials cost less than 106 elected officials and create a simpler, more easily accessible program. We'd eliminate a number of duplicated departments. As I previously mentioned, the economic development offices would go from six to one.

I believe in the end, after amalgamation, there will be more political accountability, not less. Instead of all the confusion created by dealing with a local and a Metro councillor trying to sort out who's responsible for what, residents will be able to go to one councillor and have their questions and concerns dealt with in a reasonable and forthright manner.

I've listened to many opponents of amalgamation and I've listened to the opposition they've voiced. I haven't heard a single compelling argument to sway my support for amalgamation. What I do see is hysterical opposition to any change in the status quo. The politics seem to be generated based on unfounded fear.

**1000**

The objections seem to consist of three basic objections:

(1) "Let's slow everything down and take another look at it," which really means, "Give us time to find ways to stop meaningful change." With municipal elections coming up in the fall, it only makes sense to proceed with the changes and save the money that would normally be spent electing 100 councillors and just elect the 45 that are proposed in Bill 103.

(2) "Everything's okay; don't change anything." Everything isn't okay. We can't afford the dual system of government that we're operating under. With less government we want accountable public officials, we want value for our tax dollars.

(3) "Communities will be destroyed." Communities have survived previous amalgamations, crushing tax loads and hurricanes. The neighbourhoods and communities that make Toronto such a wonderful place to live will not be threatened by amalgamation.

What's in it for me? I had to ask this question as I prepared my comments for today. I felt I had a responsibility to refute the naysayers because I support amalgamation. I'm hoping there will be a more efficient use of the resources provided by residents to our elected officials at the end of the day. I hope we end up with a government that has a vision for the future of our city and communities and not one rooted in the debris of the past.

I believe amalgamation creating the new city of Toronto is a natural progression in the development of the best place in the world to live and work. I believe everyone has a right to a dissenting view. However, I object to opposition based on deception and fearmongering. Finally, I believe the process of amalgamation will best serve me, my family, my neighbours, my local community and the residents of Metropolitan Toronto. Thanks for the opportunity to share my views.

**Mr Sergio:** Mr Brillinger, thanks for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. St Andrews, the area you live in, is a very nice area. I'm in North York and I'm very familiar with that location. It's wonderful and I hope it always will be kept and maintained that way.

You haven't mentioned the downloading of services on to the municipality and eventually on to North York residents. How do you see that this will affect your community?

**Mr Brillinger:** I believe that any downloading or reallocation of the cost of delivering services will not adversely affect my community, my tax rate or any other factor that's going to come into play in that regard. I see one big pot of money, wherever it comes from. It's still there, whether it's property tax or income tax or however you want to split it up. I don't see it going up or down. I think with the changes proposed in amalgamation there will be a more efficient use of all the resources that we as residents provide government to provide us services and that in the end it will all end up being even, or better than it is now.

**Mr Sergio:** You think social services, family benefits, welfare, housing, transportation, long-term care and child care won't have an effect eventually on either the services or taxes or both? You don't see that?

**Mr Brillinger:** The delivery of those services is going to carry on regardless of whether the city of Toronto is

amalgamated into one city versus six cities, and frankly I don't understand where the discussion about the downloading comes into the discussion about the benefits of amalgamating the city into one place. If downloading occurs and a redistribution of the resources occurs, it would be a lot easier to conduct it through one level of government rather than six separate levels of government and a Metro government, as far as I can see.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Brillinger, for coming forward this morning and making your presentation.

### TOM BARLOW

**The Chair:** Would Tom Barlow please come forward. Good morning, Mr Barlow, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Tom Barlow:** Thank you, Mr Chair and members of the committee. My name is Tom Barlow and I appear here today to speak in support of the initiative which is being taken by the government to recognize what is the reality and the promise of this city by establishing one Toronto.

I approach the consideration of this initiative from a number of perspectives. First of all, I am a resident who has lived and worked in Metropolitan Toronto for most of my adult life. I moved here in 1981. Since that time I have lived in several of the municipalities which comprise Metropolitan Toronto. I also approach this matter from the perspective of a lawyer who practises in the area of municipal and planning law. In my practice I work regularly with the process of municipal government and with individuals and companies dealing with the framework of zoning bylaws and other regulations. Finally, I approach this discussion on a personal note from the perspective of someone who has a strong sense of community and also has some experience of growing up in what was an amalgamated municipality.

As some of you may know, Cambridge, Ontario, was formed from the amalgamation of three municipalities. One of those was Galt, where I was born and raised. Galt, Preston and Hespeler amalgamated when I was growing up to form one city. As the member for Cambridge in this Legislature would no doubt agree if he were here, that one city continues to have a strong sense of neighbourhood and of community and has built upon its strengths since amalgamation to become the successful and growing municipality that Cambridge is today.

I support the direction this government proposes to take under this bill for a number of reasons. First of all, the direction of the government is consistent with the direction which has been taken by those with vision and courage in the past who established metropolitan government and those who have taken steps over the years to integrate the delivery of services as communities have matured and grown together.

No one can reasonably doubt that this municipality has grown together. Those involved in urban planning might say Metropolitan Toronto is now a mature and fully urbanized envelope. You've heard from others about the number of services and the percentage of services now delivered at the Metro level. Anyone on the street can tell you it is hard to say any more where one municipality begins in Metropolitan Toronto and another ends.

In planning terms, this is very different from those areas elsewhere in the province where upper- and lower-tier governments exist and settlement areas are separated by lands which are not similarly developed. Within Metropolitan Toronto the lines on the map which divide us have become artificial. The next logical and natural step in the evolution of Metro must surely be to recognize the reality of what now exists in the government we choose by forming one city. In doing so, I firmly believe we can be confident that the neighbourhoods and communities which make up this unique municipality will continue to exist and maintain their identities. Neighbourhoods are made up of people, not of politicians. They are not defined by artificial lines on a map.

There is nothing in this initiative by the government which restricts in any way the ability of residents to participate in the process of local government and get the government they deserve. On the contrary, it is my submission that the initiative by the government to form one city has the potential to increase the accountability of municipal government in a number of ways. I submit that improved accountability is a major feature of this initiative and one that I would like to address briefly.

Accountability is enhanced when government is understandable. I am very familiar with the bylaws that exist in Metropolitan Toronto from working with them. With one city the potential exists for bylaws of general application which are more understandable by residents and by those who carry on business throughout the municipality and are subject to local regulations. With one city it will be clearer who is responsible for delivering local services and who is responsible for the bylaws and policies which are of interest and importance to citizens. With one city everyone will know who to call.

The same councillors will be directly involved in neighbourhood decisions and also in decisions affecting all of the municipality. The number of councillors proposed under the bill is approximately the same as the number of councillors proposed by the mayors under their reform proposal at the end of last year.

**1010**

Councillors will be able to bring to their tasks the perspective of their neighbours and also the perspective of the city as a whole. They will be accountable to both. Furthermore, if the concept of community councils is adopted, councillors will be organized and represented on the executive committee on a basis which approximates current municipal boundaries.

It will be important in all matters that the councillors remain accountable to the city as a whole and also to those who elected them. However, the concept of community councils should be of particular interest to those who support the present structure of local municipalities.

Under the concept of community councils, councillors and councils would continue to be organized on a basis which approximates existing municipalities. What would disappear are the separate council chambers and the walls that now divide them and, through them, divide us all.

There are many arguments in favour of amalgamation, including the agreement of all participants that the status quo does not work and must be changed, the potential for efficiencies, strengthening the core of the GTA, a strong

and unified voice for Toronto internationally and many other factors in favour of the formation of one city which I would not have time to properly address; others have.

In the time available, these are the comments I wish to make in support of the direction proposed by the government under this bill. I thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to appear before you.

**Mr Silipo:** Thank you, Mr Barlow. Do you know what the population is in Cambridge?

**Mr Barlow:** I don't know the precise population. I believe it's in the area of approximately 100,000 people.

**Mr Silipo:** Do you know how many councillors there are on the city council there?

**Mr Barlow:** Under 20 is my recollection.

**Mr Silipo:** I actually agree with a couple of points you make in here. Obviously, on the basic position we are on different sides of this issue, and that's fine. I agree when you say that it's hard sometimes for anyone to say where one municipality in Metro ends and another one starts. But it seems to me that you know when you're there; you may not know when you crossed. There are crazy things that happen in terms of boundaries. I represent an area of the city of Toronto that borders on the city of York, and there are boundaries that actually run through people's backyards. There are some things like this that are, quite frankly, absurd. But we've heard very clearly in the presentations here from mayors and from others that there are differences between one municipality and another in the way we do things.

What I say to you, more in response and ask certainly for you to comment back, is that what people who oppose the megacity are saying to us, besides the process the government has chosen, is the fact that we are losing that local flavour, that ability to have a relationship that's effective, as a citizen, with the local council while still being in favour of making change that would deal with some of the inefficiencies and some of the craziness that's developed over the years. Don't you think that would be a more sensible way to take a look at this? I'm assuming that back in the amalgamation that took place in Cambridge there was actually some discussion that involved people before that decision was made. One of the things people are clearly saying to us here is that there has been no real discussion about this proposal, about this issue, with the citizens particularly, let alone with the politicians.

**Mr Barlow:** I'll deal with the last point first. In terms of process and discussions, I'm sure you've heard much from others. There have been many discussions and many studies over the years, which I'm generally familiar with.

**Mr Silipo:** But none of those supports this direction, Mr Barlow. That's one of the points people are making.

**Mr Barlow:** That may be a point of disagreement between us or certainly between various individuals. In terms of the process, those are my comments.

But I want to come back to your substantive comment about communities. I agree that when you're there, you know you're there, you know you're in a neighbourhood, you know you're in a community. It doesn't derive from the fact that you've strained on the street or on the highway to see that there's a sign saying that you're entering the city of York or you're entering the municipi-

pality of East York or whatever; it derives from the fact that you're in a community that has a sense of neighbourhood and a sense of community.

My strong sense, and the sense of others you've had appear before you, as well as the submissions by experts, is that this neighbourhood feeling can and will remain whether or not the artificial lines are drawn as they now are or are drawn more realistically around the urban envelope that has come to exist in the broad base of knowledge.

**The Chair:** Mr Barlow, sorry to interrupt you. Thank you for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### DAVID STRELCHUK

**The Chair:** Would David Strelchuk please come forward. Good morning, sir, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Strelchuk:** Mr Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee. My name is David Strelchuk. I am a professional civil engineer by training and have in my career worked in a municipal public works department, the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources, which I left in 1988, and the consulting engineering field. I am a long-time resident of downtown Toronto and own property in Toronto and the borough of East York.

What first aroused my keen interest was the initial response by the mayors to the provincial intent to amalgamate their municipalities. Immediately after the announcement the mayors met and announced that amalgamation wasn't necessary; they could, through combining services, save in the neighbourhood of \$240 million per year. Where were they all previous years? Does this mean we have been losing \$240 million a year? That's mind-boggling.

How much is \$240 million a year? If you take the 2.35 million residents of the proposed new Toronto, that's about \$100 per year for every man, woman and child, or for the average family \$250 a year. Another example: \$235 million is about the cost of building a new Maple Leafs hockey arena or a new Raptors facility every year. Furthermore, consultants estimate that by the year 2000 the new city would operate with up to 4,500 fewer employees than the 42,400 who now work for the seven municipalities.

Clearly, over the years it has been more important to maintain political fiefdoms than to seek tax savings. As far as I'm concerned, the prime mandate of a municipal politician is to manage tax dollars wisely. If the political system does not support this, it has failed. The mayors have found fiscal salvation too late. Backsliding is inevitable without municipal reform.

The mayors' counterproposal to a unified Toronto is to eliminate Metro and replace it with a coordinating body made up of local politicians. Metro's proposal is to eliminate the six local governments and create a new city of Toronto council. The size of the council is not indicated. Each proposal eliminates one level of elected government, namely, the other guy. The existing two layers of government have outlived their usefulness.

I would like to briefly describe a personal experience dealing with a planning issue that shows the overlap and

confusion that exists with the two levels of government. I wanted to make an addition to an investment property I own in Toronto. A committee of adjustment application was necessary. Part of the process required a public meeting. This meeting was arranged and attended by a Metro councillor, with the attendance of the city of Toronto councillor announced. The application was denied. An application was then made to amend the official plan and zoning bylaw for the proposed addition. This process also required a public hearing, which was arranged by the planning advisory committee. This meeting was attended by the city of Toronto councillor. The application subsequently received council approval.

My point is that two local politicians were involved in a fairly simple neighbourhood planning issue. I am not faulting the politicians; they were simply covering their constituent territory. However, there was no need for the involvement of two politicians and two levels of government. How about the confusion to the local residents attending the public meetings? Whom should they deal with, their Metro councillor or their city of Toronto councillor? Which planning department should they phone? Some residents just give up in frustration.

If it ain't broke, why fix it? This question has been posed in face of recognition of Toronto as one of the best cities in North America to live. Complacency resulting from these types of accolades is a dangerous trap. Cities are dynamic, evolving environments and cannot rest on their laurels because of a favourable snapshot in time.

The two-tier level of government was created in 1953 when Metro was formed from a cluster of 13 townships, towns and villages. About half of this land was rural and agricultural at the time. In 1966, these 13 were amalgamated into the six current municipalities.

## 1020

Metro has since grown and services integrated to a point where a two-tier system of government has long outlived its usefulness. A one-tier, amalgamated city will bring efficiencies and allow us to orchestrate our resources to compete internationally for investment and jobs and, at the same time, provide us the necessary tools to safeguard and add to our quality of city life.

Perhaps we would have had a better chance at the 1996 Olympics with a unified Toronto.

It has been said that the distinctive nature of diverse communities will be lost with amalgamation. It is well recognized that long-time communities, such as Swansea, Mimico, Weston and Forest Hill, have thrived after amalgamation. The cohesiveness of communities is not determined by municipal boundaries or the number of politicians serving them but rather by the strength and spirit of the communities themselves.

Political actions originate from the strength and validity of the issue and the willingness of the community to champion its cause. Politicians are merely the tools of implementation. I don't think it helps to have two politicians per area when one will do. Community advocates quickly find where the power lies and exert any necessary political pressure for changes. If more politicians result in better communities, why not double them? I don't think that's the answer. We should strive to limit the minimum number of politicians necessary to serve the people.

The proposed voluntary neighbourhood committees will provide citizens an opportunity to participate directly in municipal government in an ongoing manner rather than an ad hoc, issue-by-issue basis.

Municipalities are funding anti-amalgamation efforts. If they were truly interested in an open and honest referendum, they should fund both sides of the issue or neither side. Why should our tax dollars be spent on supporting political issues we may not agree with? Political campaigning with tax dollars should not be tolerated, regardless of the issue. That is why we have elections. Leave politics to elections.

In any case, the current referenda on amalgamation are flawed. Given that the status quo is a no-go acknowledged by almost everyone, what is the value of a no-amalgamation vote with no alternatives proposed? That leaves the gaping question of, "What are you for?" and leaves the basic problems unanswered. We will be left with endless studies and self-serving politicians chasing different options with no end in sight.

A temporary board of trustees is proposed. This is a prudent safety measure against potential irrational council actions. With no accountability, there may be a temptation to fatten severance packages, dispose of assets without due diligence or other actions not in the best interests of taxpayers. This by no means is a foregone conclusion, but councils in the past have not always acted wisely, even under the best of conditions. In fact, without such precautionary steps, there would no doubt be much criticism over why such safeguards were not in place. It is good insurance for the protection of taxpayer assets.

There has been much ado about orders in council authorizing these measures before the legislation was passed. In hindsight, this should not have been done. The measures could have been proposals only, pending legislation. The intent and effect would have been the same.

The fearmongering comments of former Mayor Sewell in comparisons to dictatorships are irresponsible and eventually cast aspersions on him rather than add to the dialogue. The board of trustees would dissolve in less than a year. Given an improbable, worst-case scenario of unreasonable board decisions, the newly elected city of Toronto council can redirect any measures it chooses and will be responsible to the electorate.

In summary, the status quo is no longer acceptable. Significant cost savings can be made and governance improved by eliminating one level of government and amalgamating the six municipalities into a unified city of Toronto. Local neighbourhoods and communities can be maintained and given an effective voice through neighbourhood committees.

There is no advantage to prolonging the debate between stalemated municipal politicians and their supporting bureaucracies. They are driven mainly by self-survival. It would have been politically easier for the province to do nothing, but they have chosen to do the right thing. The province has stepped outside this endless circle of competing local politicians and proposed a new city of Toronto that will enhance its economic viability and the quality of life we all enjoy. If there are some snags that develop, surely these can be resolved in

negotiations between a newly elected city of Toronto council and the province. Let's get on with building a better future.

**The Vice-Chair (Mrs Julia Munro):** Thank you very much. That was exactly 10 minutes. We appreciate your coming this morning and making a presentation.

### LORNA KRAWCHUK

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Lorna Krawchuk, please. Good morning, Ms Krawchuk, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Lorna Krawchuk:** Madam Chair and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to make a presentation to you. My name is Lorna Krawchuk, and I am a councillor in the borough of East York.

I know you have already heard from my mayor, Michael Prue, and from the president of a ratepayers' organization of which I am a member, the Leaside Property Owners' Association. This afternoon you will be hearing from the president of another ratepayers' association in my ward, Penny Pepperell, representing the Governor's Bridge Ratepayers Association. The points they have made, and what I understand Penny Pepperell to be presenting to you, are views with which I concur, so you will know from that that I am speaking as one who has many difficulties with Bill 103.

One of the symbols on the borough coat of arms is a bulldog. I assume that the choice was made originally because many of the first residents of the township of East York were from England and a British bulldog seemed appropriate. When I was first elected to council, the mayor was David Johnson. Yes, bad David Johnson. He provided the eight of us on council, five of whom were elected for the first time that year, with an excellent role model of a mayor who spent the taxpayers' money carefully. But even he presided over a municipality where annual tax increases occurred routinely.

Now, with changing times, we have become progressively leaner, and 1997 is the fifth year in a row where we have had no increase at all in our municipal mill rate, including having to absorb the loss of the previous substantial grants of various kinds from the provincial government. Our capital program is likewise responsible. Our debt is manageable and reducing each year, to be completely gone in the next few years. Our commercial-industrial properties are being redeveloped, and our reserves and reserve funds are healthy. Thus, I find it distasteful that East York continues to be mentioned by people from other municipalities as a municipality on the verge of bankruptcy. This is not true. This bulldog is still here.

The rationale for Bill 103 continues to elude me. I have seen many references to the money to be saved made by the Premier, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and government members, and with no other information I know of, take it that the report from KPMG is the source material for these statements.

We asked our treasurer to consult with the borough auditors, Deloitte and Touche, and to report after reviewing and scrutinizing the figures contained in the KPMG report released by the province. This has now been done, and a copy of our treasurer's report to the regulatory and

development committee of East York council, dated February 24, 1997, and Deloitte and Touche's letter to the treasurer dated February 2, 1997, have been forwarded to you. I have additional copies of this report with me, if you should wish them. The report is five pages long, so I will not go over the points but read you their second-to-last paragraph.

"Based on information that we have reviewed, we are of the opinion that great savings has resulted and will continue to result from efficiency enhancements, no matter what reasonable format of government structure is selected. We do not believe, however, that there will be any significant savings as a direct result of the proposed amalgamation over the next five-year period."

Another point mentioned frequently by supporters of this bill is that Bill 103 will reduce the number of politicians within Metro Toronto. That is correct, from 106 down to 45. But what is being traded off here? I won't speak for other municipalities, but at the borough of East York we are eight part-time councillors. We are paid part-time salaries and our total support staff is one person. With the system proposed in Bill 103, a population of approximately 103,000, which happens to be East York's population, would have two full-time members of council. I would think that each councillor would have two support staff. In my calculations, the total amount spent would be about the same as now.

What would be lost? In East York, we get the benefit of eight sets of skills, plus the skills of the mayor. We have councillors who are younger and older, male and female, with professional skills — an architect, for example — or more practical skills — on our last council, a plumber. We can truly represent our community. With eight of us, as well, we can share out the responsibility of representing council on a number of important advisory and managerial boards in East York. It is not necessary to be wealthy or to be indebted to a political party or a developer to run a successful campaign and win election.

### 1030

Another major loss for our particular municipality is the loss of our identity as a municipality. The boundaries for the town of Leaside and the township of East York have been set for many years and became the borough of East York, as you know. The boundaries for electoral districts by Bill 103 result in pieces of East York in up to six different wards, with all our present boundaries obliterated.

The argument that often appears with the too-many-politicians one is that of too many levels of government. It certainly can be confusing to have a local government physically covering the same territory as our present Metro level of government and then have various versions of greater Toronto area coordination as well. Previous studies have substantiated that this is something that can and should be done better. But none of the previous reports specific to this area or other reports from around the world has shown that eradicating the local level of government is the solution.

Also, no matter how often I read the sections in Bill 103 talking about neighbourhood committees and community councils, I can't seem to see that there are any

gains in accountability. The council for the city would establish neighbourhood committees to provide advice and guidance to community councils composed of the elected representatives from seven or eight wards, who would then make recommendations to the whole council on matters such as official plans and official plan amendments, but the overall decision would be made by the new city of Toronto council. Therefore, any planning change ultimately appears to be going through three sets of hoops, instead of the two now in place.

We have spoken with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario about our concerns. I believe there are some issues connected to the process involved in Bill 103 in which they may come forward to you, but as you are well aware, AMO is concentrating on province-wide issues in other bills at this time.

Listening to the radio yesterday, there was a program that had nothing to do with this issue, but the person being interviewed said, "Nobody builds a wall with the bricks in mid-air," and proceeded to provide the information as to how something had come about. I think we need to lay a strong foundation for our urban area. We need to take the time to ensure that bricks of cost savings, the number of levels of government, the number of politicians, if that is truly a substantive issue, have that necessary strong foundation. I know for sure that our council would welcome an opportunity for meaningful consultation to find a solution that is better for all of us than what we see before us as Bill 103.

**Mr Gilchrist:** Thank you, Ms Krawchuk, for coming before us and making a thoughtful presentation here today. I'd like to deal with a fairly important aspect of your presentation here today, and that's this continuing myth, if I can use that term, that somehow size is a predeterminant of whether something is local or not. If 100,000 is local, then surely 500,000 isn't; and if 500,000 is, then surely 2 million can be.

This bill eliminates the second tier. That's what it does. It responds to an initiative that dates back to 1950 when the city of Toronto wanted to expand its local boundaries to take in the total territory that we know as Metro Toronto today. There will be one local government.

To highlight the difference between the view you're bringing forward and my perspective, my riding has the same population as the borough of East York. We have four very distinct, very vibrant communities — not two, not East York and Leaside; we have four, very distinct. They continue to exist. In fact, one of them, the Guildwood community, has the highest percentage of households as members of a ratepayers' group anywhere in Metro Toronto. In terms of community involvement, in terms of shaping their individual destinies, we didn't need a separate city government, obviously. All of those things have happened in the context of half a million people who live in Scarborough. Councillors from as far away as Victoria Park and Steeles routinely sit there and pass judgement on council deliberations that affect just the local issues down in Scarborough East.

What is it that's so unique about East York — and I ask this in all sincerity — that you can say to the people of Scarborough East that people in East York deserve

something different, and also say to the councillors in Scarborough that somehow they don't understand what they're doing because they have to deal with the concerns of 500,000 people whereas the eight councillors in East York do have a handle on their community?

**Ms Krawchuk:** First of all, I'm not saying that 100,000 is the perfect number so we should take all of Metro Toronto and divide it up into 100,000-level clumps. It just happens that we came about with a system in the latest round of amalgamation that had East York with 100,000 as a population. As far as we're concerned, 100,000 is fine for us, and we're certainly not saying that 500,000 isn't a good number for Scarborough.

But the problem is the second tier. The other studies that have talked about getting rid of the second tier have talked about things extending beyond Steeles — talk about an artificial boundary; Steeles is it — that we look as a whole at how to deal well with the economic health of the whole GTA; that we do something about that as opposed to this artificial version that says 100,000 is too small. I remember the first time I went to PEI and was politically active and realized their population was the same as ours.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for being here today with us, Ms Krawchuk. Sorry, we've run out of time.

#### TORONTO WOMEN FOR A JUST AND HEALTHY PLANET

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Angela Miles, please. Good morning, Ms Miles, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Angela Miles:** I'm very pleased to be here and to have the opportunity to comment on the megacity proposal with so many well-researched presentations. I have handed out to people a Xeroxed sheet with a hand-drawn graphic on it, because my presentation's at home on the kitchen table, but I'll do my best. I'll be very brief and then I hope you'll ask questions that can help me link these larger issues I want to bring to the debate to what is being examined.

I want to try to look at the whole question of efficiency and the kind of frame within which we discuss that, because that seems to be the term within which the discussion is being framed: We want more efficiency, I think defined as smaller expenditure of tax dollars. We've been privileged, those of us who have been following the hearings, to hear very many studies brought in showing that even in those fairly narrow terms the claim is pretty problematic that a larger unit will save dollars, that fewer representatives are cost-efficient in that narrow sense.

I think there are other questions than that one, which are: Whose efficiency? For whom? At whose expense and in terms of what values? Efficiency in a narrow economic sense is: Produce more for less labour. There are many things indicating that we need to redefine that term economically now to take into account factors other than labour. If we want to save the planet we have to start looking for efficiency vis-à-vis use of raw materials and resources. We have to start redefining efficiency.

What I'd also like to do is raise the question of, efficiency at doing what? What I would like to say for

the group I'm here speaking for, Toronto Women for a Just and Healthy Planet, and of course a just and healthy city is that we would like to see the debate start with the values of life, of human and non-human life, of people and the planet. In that sense what we have to do as a set of communities, very vibrant communities, as has been attested to at these hearings, with very reflective and very active citizens, is decide how to organize ourselves and our resources and our potentialities and futures to maximize that for everyone.

I brought this graphic — and I thank you very much for Xeroxing this for me here; I find the support was wonderful — to indicate some kinds of things that tend to get overlooked. What we have here is a graph of some research that was done by Hilkka Pietilka, who is a Finnish economist. She studied the Finnish economy and divided it into three sectors: the free economy, the protected economy and the fettered economy. By the way, I will hand in these presentations with a full explanation of this; what's at my kitchen table I will make available to the committee.

#### 1040

The free economy is all the locally produced goods and services for local use that are outside of the market. A large part of that is housework, but there are many other volunteer activities and all kinds of things that sustain us as individuals and communities.

The protected economy is those services produced for local use that are in the market, and those include transportation, education, health services and so on.

The fettered economy is goods produced for competitive trade outside the community and often outside the country. She calls that the fettered economy. This is the economy that is subject to competition internationally.

If you look at the figures — and this is why I'm so glad you have this graph — these are done from my memory; I will give you the real, for sure accurate thing, but the proportions are true. The free economy is 46% of all the time spent in productive activity, and the value produced is 34%. It's not as productive. For the time you put in you don't produce as much value. However, it is the bulk of the economically productive activity in an economy. "Protected" is those services: 35% of the time put into production and 40% of the value. The fettered economy: 19% of the time and 26% of the value.

What we have is a debate that's going on nationally, internationally and locally, where everything is organized around how to serve the fettered economy, how to put all our resources into its capacity to compete internationally and to be successful. While it's very important to maintain that capacity, we must not lose sight of the local context, the communities, the environments, the context where real value for people and the planet is produced. That is, the worth of what we need to survive in sustainable and collective and communal ways, in healthy ways, is really done in the protected and the free economies, which have to be valued and protected.

When we talk about efficiency and we mean simply spending fewer tax dollars, what happens is that all the goods and services that make our life livable and qualitatively fine are defined as costs. It's absurd. It's a crazy

mindset. We sit around our committees and our radio talk shows and we talk about costs, costs, costs, and we never once say to ourselves: "Yes, we have to do things well, we have to use our resources well for our local needs and for our future, but we mustn't define all we provide for each other and ourselves and our future as costs." We will make wrong decisions if we don't start from the value of what we want to do as communities and then make decisions and develop efficiency in terms which recognize all that.

In other words, we have to change how we define wealth, how we define value, how we define costs, how we understand ourselves as citizens and taxpayers and how we understand our services. The megacity debate about, "Cut out a few councillors; do it efficiently," has been a real concern to Toronto Women for a Just and Healthy Planet, because we see slipping away and buried and somehow lost a real human frame for the discussion in terms which we, I'm sure, all value.

We'd like to say to the committee, in your considerations do some doublethink or some unthink or question some of the terms which have been set about this thing of efficiency. I don't mean to say we don't need to look very carefully at how we use our resources. What I mean is, there are massively large questions. There are global agendas now where everything in the world is being organized to move more and more of our activity into the fettered sector, so that hospitals can compete, and old age homes. In other words, you make all the areas that have been protected into openly competitive internationally. And this is services as well as goods; free trade used to be just goods but now it's services and capital, which is a very different question.

For instance, I work at a university. Universities in Ontario are now in competition with universities from the States, which are not subject to any of the standards which are — I won't say imposed on universities here but protected at universities here. They can hire a couple of recent graduates who may not even have a PhD and they can set them up in classes. Everybody enrols, gets a cheap degree. This is not efficiency; this is not saving. This is loss.

The world trade system and our local organizations are being shifted to fit that agenda. I think we need to look at that and decide how to protect our competitiveness, our viability economically in this large context, but how to protect as well the real values of our lives.

I hope there's time for you to ask me to clarify. I don't know how long I have.

**The Vice-Chair:** You have about 10 seconds.

**Ms Miles:** You might wonder what this has to do with this debate. I wish it was the core of the debate, but it may seem kind of far-flung for you at the moment.

**Mr Sergio:** You didn't leave any time for questions, so why don't you clarify?

**Ms Miles:** I thought if you were really wondering, "What is she talking about?" then you could ask specifically what the puzzle was.

**Mr Sergio:** I wanted to, but we have no time.

**The Vice-Chair:** That's right. I'm terribly sorry. Thank you for appearing here today. We appreciate you coming.

## NICK DOEHLER

**The Chair:** I'd like to call upon Nick Doeher, please. Good morning, Mr Doeher, and thank you for coming.

**Mr Nick Doeher:** It's a great honour to speak to all of you today. I would like to say that I was born and grew up in Toronto and I'm a resident of north Toronto. I'm speaking here on behalf of myself alone about my ideas about the proposed Bill 103.

Bill 103 presents a major change in the city of Toronto, and as such should have been brought about with a lot more consultation than has occurred. I understand that the bill was introduced as a done deal, as the minister called it. It was presented to us as something which the government had decided would go into effect. Like any major project, its chances of success are diminished by the fact that there was so little participation in its development. The problem with the bill is that it had been presented with so little consultation.

There are many ideas that people in government have for people in private industry which turned out to be not so good once they're introduced. I think of the example of the metric system. As we all remember, back in the 1970s it made a great deal of sense, and if you had to argue it logically you would probably agree that it was a better system. Yet when it was introduced without asking anyone, it led to many inefficiencies and the implementation was very expensive.

In this case there have been no real studies done on why this amalgamation should take place. The Crombie commission, which I must point out was held in private without public consultation, really didn't look into the costs that would be involved. It looked into the logic of having different levels of government pay for different services, but it actually never did a profit-and-loss statement. This was left to the company KPMG. They, however, only used the figures provided to them by the government. Although they actually fulfilled the terms of their mandate, we must question what the actual value of the results was. It was basically taking government figures and adding them up. What the figures were based on is something which is in dispute.

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If we looked at what the private sector does, or how the private sector operates or should operate, I would say it wouldn't bring about such a massive amalgamation or hostile takeover, whatever you wish to call it, without actually figuring out how much it would cost and without actually getting figures it knew were reliable.

Come January 1, 1998, the transition team will come into play and it's their responsibility, I suppose, to ensure the amalgamation takes place as planned. But what planning has really been put into place before they take office? What are they going to do once they come in? Are they then going to initiate studies to see how efficiencies could be made? I would question why this hasn't been done already. It would have been much better had they studied the problem before taking office. They may find when they come into office in January that the savings are not as great as they expect.

The argument in favour of this bill, or one of the few arguments, I suppose, has been that there will be cost

savings. We're all aware of the leaflet provided by the ministry which said the local cities accounted for only 28% of spending, yet that's the area where all the savings must occur. If there is duplication, it would be duplication between the various cities or between the cities and Metro, so when we're looking to reduce costs we could only look to reduce costs from amalgamation by reducing the costs of the local cities.

That is 28% of the budget, which the local cities account for, that can be reduced while reducing duplication, but because it's only 28% of overall spending it accounts for very little room to reduce overall spending. If we were to, say, cut spending by the cities by 10%, that would account for only about 2% of overall spending for Metro. So the actual efficiencies involved are quite small.

The whole logic behind this proposal apparently stems from the Who Does What committee. What I'd like to say about that is that the central thesis of Who Does What is that services should be delivered by the level of government that raises the taxes for them. Now, I know many people would question whether that's a fair approach to take. However, I would say that if we go along with that thesis, that the government which raises the taxes should be the one that spends them, then what we have in Toronto, following the Who Does What proposals, are cities that raise all their own revenue, that no longer receive any provincial subsidies and as such should be allowed to determine how they spend the money.

This means there's no need to impose a transition team on them and there's no need to impose amalgamation. If these cities want to bring about amalgamation, that should be up to them. But it would be wrong for the province, which now no longer provides any support for the cities, to actually tell them how they should proceed. If the province goes ahead with proposals to tell the cities what to do without actually getting the approval of the electorate and of the people who govern the cities, then it will find problems in that it is very difficult to implement any idea, even a very good idea, without broad support from the people affected.

For those reasons, and I suppose for many others, I feel we should reconsider this bill. If it is that important to bring about amalgamation, further hearings should be held and we should have a proper discussion and decide at that time whether to bring it about. I feel that if amalgamation occurs in this year and in the following year, we will face many serious problems. Although I understand that most people now feel unfavourable toward amalgamation, it will be interesting to see how people will actually feel once it comes about and how they will feel about the problems it may lead to.

**Mr Sergio:** Thanks for coming down and making your presentation to our committee. We share a lot of the concerns you expressed in your presentation.

One of the presenters this morning said there is no inventing disaster and the sky won't fall and stuff like that. Well, we know that. Let's hope it doesn't. But also there is a real possibility that taxes will go up, that services will come down, or both at the same time. Suppose we are right and the government is wrong but it

still goes ahead with it, what do you think is going to happen?

**Mr Doehler:** What's going to happen is people are going to be upset about the amalgamation and will probably consider going back. That will bring about additional costs. I'd be interested to know how much it would cost to go back.

**Mr Sergio:** If you can go back.

**Mr Doehler:** If you can.

**Mr Sergio:** To go back to something else you have said, this is the only report — we don't have a report from the government — that didn't have any study at all. We have been asking for some data, information, statistics, facts, figures, on which they have based their bill. We can't get any of that information. Do you think it's because they don't want to provide it, they don't have anything, or they just want to push it through regardless because this is their agenda?

**Mr Doehler:** I'll try to look at the most favourable light on the government. I think they had an idea which they thought was correct and put it through without the proper study. Many people make that mistake and I think they have as well.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for appearing before us this morning.

### DEBORAH SWORD

**The Chair:** I'd like to call on Deborah Sword, please. Good morning, Ms Sword, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Deborah Sword:** Thank you. And now for something completely different. I don't have a position on amalgamation. I'm a conflict manager and dispute resolver. My master's thesis was on public policy dispute resolution. One of my areas of expertise is conflict analysis and another is conflict management systems design. I want to give a brief analysis of what's happening and some possible strategies to perhaps change the nature of the exchange.

I know this government supports dispute resolution. The Attorney General has just announced mandatory mediation, for example. I am requesting that Bill 103 be treated as another opportunity to apply dispute resolution principles to public policy disputes. There are dozens of examples of this happening successfully.

There are three parts to my submission this morning. I want to talk about the nature of conflict, about an analysis of this specific conflict and then about some design options, as I say, to improve the quality of the exchange and maybe turn things around.

Because of the time constraints, this is not intended to be concise or thorough. This is going to be the "galloping tour" of dispute resolution. I apologize for the superficial treatment.

A little bit about the nature of conflict. Conflicts move through stages and within those stages there are levels. Conflicts evolve and mature. Often the stages are predictable. For those of us who understand conflict analysis, we've been watching this debate and saying, "Yes, we knew that was going to happen."

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We know that conflicts end. They come to a resolution, somehow. Why is it important to try to resolve a conflict when we know that eventually it's going to go away, that people will move on? The reason is that conflicts can end in feelings of either jubilation, victory, solidarity and cooperation or they can end in bewilderment and anxiety. We know that feelings and beliefs shape a society. We know that's what culture is based upon. If we create a foundation for whatever change is going to happen, if we create a foundation of bitterness and anger, we will be creating something quite different than a creation that's based on a spirit of collaboration, cooperation and joint problem-solving.

We have choices in this. We can decide what approach to take to things and it can be a conflict resolution approach or another approach. There are lots of approaches. What I'm suggesting is that today we are writing the future in which we all have to live, so consider the residue of the conflict and the legacy of the conflict that will influence the future.

Conflict is value-neutral, it is neither good nor bad, but it does have very real good or bad consequences. Society has to live with and adapt to those consequences. I suggest it's worth working very hard to try to turn the conflict into a constructive and useful exercise.

Something about the analysis of this particular conflict: We know change can be very challenging. From the research we know what factors are likely to create the most and least amount of conflict. Classic negotiation theory is very useful to analyse any conflict. We know that negotiation, to be most useful, should take into account the needs and interests of all. We know that we are most successful in getting what we want when we obtain the cooperation of those we would otherwise have to overcome. There are strategies for obtaining willingness to cooperate and the most important is to understand everybody's needs and interests. It's a lead-up to negotiation. We develop a mutual understanding of our interests. From that, we know what additional information we need to have a meaningful negotiation.

In this conflict, we went directly to bargaining on the basis of positions either for or against, omitting all the intermediary steps. We know that when people go into hard bargaining with a power imbalance, those who are feeling powerless do whatever they can. This is not a surprise.

Some of the common barriers to resolving conflict are equally applicable in this analysis. The first is misunderstanding. When parties move from an idea to hard positional bargaining, they stop communicating and misunderstandings are inevitable. Each believes the other does not understand and is therefore wrong. No one wants bad government. We have different ideas on what good government is, but I think there's pretty universal agreement that we want good government. So we need to have remedies for the misunderstanding by returning to the missed steps of trying to understand each other's interests and needs. We will discover that there are things we have in common, such as, we want good government.

Another common barrier is the use of facts. The lawyers call this the battle of the experts and we are

seeing this. Again, that was predictable. When people can't figure out the correct answer, they get frustrated and turn to a preference, based on their own judgement. This frustrates others, who believe they are rejecting objective facts. It becomes a cycle of disagreement over whose facts are the more correct. A remedy is to design a joint fact-finding, problem-solving system in which information all believe to be credible can be gathered to answer questions.

Other barriers are procedures and escalation, and those work to inflame the conflict but there are conflict management strategies for resolving those.

I want to go to the third part of my talk, which is some design options. The present conflict involves these barriers and variations and more. Even so, a conflict management design could be utilized very successfully to address everyone's interests. What would it take to transform this conflict into conflict management? I suggest it would take three things and they are already present. All we would have to do is divert them.

(1) A bit of time: This conflict is already taking a lot of time. Public employees, politicians and citizens alike, who should be attending to their jobs and their families, are instead devoting thousands of hours to sustaining this conflict. The energy could be channelled far more productively into finding ways to accommodate each other.

(2) Some resources: We have already seen the estimates of the millions of dollars that have been spent in fighting each other. I suggest it would be better value for less money if it was spent on a conflict management process instead.

(3) The will to try: It can be hard for people to agree to commit to such a process. There has been a loss of trust; there's been deep entrenchment of positions. It can be turned around. That's been done in many disputes that were far more entrenched, far more durable, far longer-lasting than this one. Disputes that have been raging for more than a decade have been resolved through dispute resolution and conflict management.

Designing a conflict management system is very situationally specific and it is mostly common sense. A lot depends on finding the needs that have to be addressed and the interests underlying the needs. Generally speaking there are levels of design that can be used independently of each other or as part of an inter-connected plan. We can stream parts of a conflict into a separate process or we can deal with the matter holistically. That's part of the design process.

We know that some of the levels to the conflict management system design would have to deal with facts. This is communicating information in the face of misunderstandings that could occur at any minute. We all have, or believe in, different information and sources of information. But if we could design a process for sharing quality information that was agreed to by all the parties, it would go a long way to resolving that particular source of conflict.

We have disagreement over methods. We could design joint problem-solving sessions that could remedy that.

There are disagreements on goals and disagreements on values or the basic view of the world. These can be

mediated, leaving the parties able to coexist peacefully. We might even find, to our surprise and pleasure, that our values on some of the issues are very much the same.

In conclusion, as I started, I have no position on the issue of amalgamation, but I am committed to the concept that dispute resolution processes are a superior method of addressing the conflict in which we all find ourselves. We're all spending too much time, money, energy and emotion on a subject that could be resolved using methods that have stood the test of time. I and my dispute resolution colleagues have been watching the conflict escalate, knowing it doesn't have to be this way.

There is a legacy that continues to exist after the conflict is resolved. A conflict in which everyone feels attacked, whether in the end they win or lose, leaves a legacy of bitterness and anger. The legacy of a conflict-managed process with mutual gain is hopefulness and a commitment to implement the plan. I submit that the greater Toronto area could use a good dash of hopefulness right now, so I'm just asking that we be willing to try.

Have I left time for questions?

**The Chair:** Unfortunately, not at all, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward today to make your presentation.

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LAURA ELEEN

**The Chair:** Would Laura Eleen please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Laura Eleen:** The fundamental principles of democracy are that local government belongs to and should be responsible to the local citizens who elected it, not to the provincial government. No changes in the structure of local government should be made without the consent of the local citizens, using a democratic process which draws on their energy, knowledge, goodwill and support.

The Ontario provincial government is attempting to change the face of Metro Toronto without consulting with its residents. Under Bill 103, all of the municipalities in Metro will be amalgamated into one city and local community access to elected representation will be seriously eroded. There is no evidence that this change will be cost-effective and in fact, with changes to the taxation system and the creation of a new mega-bureaucracy, our taxes will likely go up.

Downloading welfare is wrong in principle. It also will increase property taxes in Metro by an estimated \$530 million per year. This increase could average at least \$2,500 per property. The board of trade estimates each business in Metro will pay \$7,800 more in property taxes each year because of downloading. Property taxes for Metro homeowners will increase anywhere from 15% to 30%. No one knows the exact amount because the province has never done any impact studies.

What will it mean if property taxes and rents have to go up? In a recession, more welfare; more taxes; fewer services for seniors, even though the population is aging; higher TTC and GO fares; cuts to fire protection; replacing paramedics, who are now called for heart attacks too, with volunteers; higher rents; more homeless; users pay

for ambulances; lower-quality day care; crowded classrooms; more poverty, more crime; more small businesses will go bankrupt.

The combined cost of these added to the individual's tax bill will be \$1.8 billion. Taken off your tax bill: \$1.26 billion for education and children's aid. This will result in over \$530 million more for the same services. I feel that I can speak on this proposed cheapening of education services, as I am an unemployed primary school teacher, with a qualification in teaching English as a second language, or ESL, from the University of Toronto, faculty of education.

Present education spending on Toronto schools is 20% above the average in Ontario because Metro has more students needing ESL and special education from low-income or single-parent families and has developed innovative programs.

The province has not agreed to keep up the present educational standards or fund the unique needs of Toronto students. People with qualifications like mine are unemployed. Instead, the provincially appointed Education Improvement Commission, EIC, will dictate education structure and priorities. Decisions by the EIC are not subject to review. Local boards will have no power to ensure that local property tax dollars benefit the children in their municipality. Further, many believe the government will strip Metro of about \$400 million and give that money to other school boards in the province. The motivation is profit, not the public good.

Soon, only wealthy people or those with the backing of a major political party will be able to mount credible election campaigns.

It is extremely important not to fix what isn't broken. It would mean the loss of local vigilance, which explains much of our livability and distinctive urban culture. The fierce determination of existing cities away from amalgamation is because they embody a complex history of the fine-grained negotiations that result in cities that work. The various city halls throughout the region are well-used civic places that evoke real pride in their citizenry. They are different from one another, reflecting the unique cultural makeup of each community. They need to be made to work better, not eradicated.

As the city becomes larger and larger, the ability of the decision-makers to understand individual neighbourhoods and districts decreases, lessening wise decision-making. The true test would occur when the proposed 44-member council sat together to debate a development issue. Are all of the councillors able to form a mental image of the place in question, from the Kingsway to Guildwood, from Cabbagetown to Yonge and Sheppard, the street intersections, buildings, activities, the people who live and work there? If not, beware the consequences.

Primarily also when planning for the future, environmental and ecological considerations must be made. Environmental programs started by local councils include: Every Drop Counts, a city of Toronto water conservation program; the highly successful blue box recycling program; backyard composting and city-level composting programs; support for the Task Force to Bring Back the Don and the cleanup of the Humber River; creation of the Toronto atmospheric fund and commitment to the Toronto target of 20% carbon monoxide reduction.

The Harris government plans to privatize water and sewage treatment plants. This will inevitably cause hefty water and sewage price hikes. In England and Wales, with privatization of water services in 1989, 450% increases have occurred in some cases, a 600% rise in dysentery, a 200% rise in hepatitis, gastrointestinal problems and dramatic increases in pollution offences. In England they even go so far as to cut off the water supply to poor families that can't afford to pay, prompting the British Medical Association to call for a ban on water disconnections due to the serious public health consequences.

This kind of blatant profiteering and meagre reinvestment in the quality of water and sewage systems can happen in Ontario. According to the Ministry of Environment and Energy, 25% of Ontario's water and sewage infrastructure is almost 50 years old and nearing the end of its lifespan. Some infrastructure is older than Canada. The profit motive of private companies depends upon increasing water use, and will work against efforts to conserve water.

Multinational companies lining up to buy Ontario's water and sewage assets are clearly interested in cornering a North American water market. Will the current Ontario government prevent private interests from diverting Ontario's water by pipeline to thirsty markets in the US? Even with Ontario's abundant supplies of fresh water, future droughts, overpopulation and climate change could lead to diminished supplies and conflicts between water users in the province. Canadians who recall the debate over the North America free trade agreement should also recall that, as a commodity under NAFTA, Ontario's water would have to be perpetually supplied, even during times of shortage in Canada.

Consideration must be made of the aforementioned environmental issues. Consider this:

The amalgamation legislation will almost triple the number of people each councillor represents and make it difficult for local citizens and environmental groups to have access to their councillor.

The workload of councillors will increase, making it difficult for them to be environmental champions or to do justice to specific neighbourhood environmental issues.

If bylaws from all councils are meshed in amalgamation, there will be pressure to adopt the lowest common denominator rather than the most environmentally sound policies.

The funding shortfall resulting from the mega-downloading of costs to municipalities will result in cuts to environmental programs and services.

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Ms Eileen, you're getting towards the end of your time. We're going to have ask you to wrap it up.

**Ms Eileen:** In summary, in addition to the downloading of child care, welfare costs, seniors' services and family benefits, public health, long-term care services, ambulance services, public housing and public transit, this government is so bankrupt of ideas to improve the life of the people in Metro that all they could think of is to give us seven casinos.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

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## UNEMPLOYED WORKERS COUNCIL

**The Chair:** Would John MacLennan please come forward. Are you Mr MacLennan?

**Mr John MacLennan:** I'm Mr MacLennan. Do I look familiar?

**The Chair:** Have you made a presentation before?

**Mr MacLennan:** I actually was with York Citizens for Local Democracy. I also put under the capacity of my employment as coordinator for the Unemployed Workers Council. I won't be speaking.

**The Chair:** I understand that.

**Mr MacLennan:** The elected co-chairs will be speaking. Could I ask a question before we start?

**The Chair:** Actually, individuals can only appear once before the committee. I've got some other individuals —

**Mr MacLennan:** I put in for the Unemployed Workers Council and I was phoned for the Unemployed Workers Council. I told her that wouldn't be me. I told her it would be two other persons, the two elected people from the Unemployed Workers Council and I'm just here to explain that to you. I think it's pretty simple.

The question I have is, why does the Unemployed Workers Council only get 10 minutes? I was here last week, as you remember, for York Citizens and we had 15 minutes.

**The Chair:** Each caucus is allowed to select a certain number of groups which they've decided to allot 15 minutes to, and all the rest only get 10.

**Mr MacLennan:** I see. They've tailored their remarks to try to stay within the 10-minute margin. I would like to introduce Janie Rollins. She's the co-chair for Unemployed Workers Council. The other co-chair is Terry Kelly. Ms Rollins will go first.

**Ms Janie Rollins:** I would like to thank you for letting me speak on Bill 103. As an organization of unemployed people, we believe that megacity will create more unemployment. Estimations are 4,500 jobs lost directly from Bill 103, and when combined with Bills 104 and 105, the resulting privatization will cause an even greater loss of employment.

Most people, when speaking of the unemployed, speak in terms of numbers, some figures on a piece of paper. Our organization must deal with the person, the flesh and blood, whose dreams and future are being shattered. For the sake of simplicity I have arranged the unemployed into categories.

Expertise and experience: They are the ones who have been laid off mainly because of downsizing. Their UI has run out. These people have been hardworking, motivated etc. They cannot get jobs. No matter how hard they try, no one is hiring. They cannot even get jobs that pay less money. Their high level of education is held against them. These people have been forced to cash in their RRSPs and sell their homes. They have no choice, for they have no money and are not allowed on welfare if they own property.

Skilled and semiskilled occupations: This group worked their way into positions where they attained middle-class income. They represent a major contributor to the tax base and are now being victimized by massive

unemployment. They are losing their homes. Their dreams and aspirations are being eroded. They will end up either collecting social assistance or on the street.

Young and highly educated: Graduated in the last 10 years, many from master's degrees in science, areas they were encouraged to go into. Most of this group have still not been able to get an opportunity to use their education. The only experience that they have been able to get has been with minimum wage jobs offering no future. They cannot earn enough to pay back their student loans and are either disillusioned or becoming that way.

Young and still in school: Depressed, terrified, afraid that the choice of studies they have embarked on will not be the correct one and that they will end up like their older contemporaries.

University dropouts: Lack of funds to finish, afraid they will never be able to finish, stuck in minimum wage jobs, hopes dashed due to no means of getting further ahead and creating a future for themselves. Unless a job creation program is started immediately, this group will become permanently alienated from society. They will leave a legacy of homelessness and dependency.

Highly educated immigrants: This group was encouraged to come to Canada. Our high commissions misinformed them about the true situation here, telling them, "You will have no problems getting employment with your education and experience." They sold their homes and moved here. Their money is running out and they are afraid of what will happen to them. They feel betrayed and used.

They have put into Canadian society every cent that they collected throughout their lives. Now that we have stripped them of all their finances and left them bare and vulnerable, are we just to kick them out? What does that make us? Our treatment of them makes me ashamed to say I am Canadian.

Traditional group of unemployed: When we think of this group, we tend to think of the uneducated, the severely handicapped, the single parent, people with personal problems, psychiatric conditions, the temporarily disabled and the temporarily out-of-work. Many of this group will end up on welfare.

All of the groups — and there are more — large numbers are ending up on welfare or the streets. Also, being unemployed leads to depression, thus requiring more health services, but our social services are being cut, so they will not be able to get the help they need.

In conclusion, the unemployment that will result from megacity is one more straw that the unemployed will have to bear in an already difficult situation. We demand that the government withdraw Bill 103 and sit down with the local municipalities and help to create jobs to put us back to work.

**Mr Terry Kelly:** My name is Terry Kelly. I've lived in Toronto since 1953 when my family immigrated here. I went to school here. I'm an iron worker by trade in the construction industry. I'm out of work. I've been married here. I've raised a son and I have a grandson now here in Toronto.

The presentation I'm making today on behalf of the Unemployed Workers Council is in opposition to Bill 103, the amalgamation of the five cities and one borough into a mega-Toronto. There are numerous reasons for our

opposition to Bill 103. Other groups and individuals have already expressed their concerns, with which we are largely in agreement.

One of the UWC's major concerns is that this legislation is one more piece of job elimination, rather than job creation, by the Tory government. Over a year and a half ago this government was elected after campaigning on a platform promising massive job creation. Unlike the federal Tories' promise of jobs, jobs, jobs, the Ontario Tories specified in their blue book the exact number of jobs they would create: 725,000 jobs. This is not an insignificant number, but one that would make a dent in the existing massive unemployment in Ontario. So where are the jobs?

Bill 103 lacks distinction, for it is just another piece of legislation that has in its design the elimination of jobs. Once again we are told in the government's own paid-for report the approximate number of jobs to be eliminated due to amalgamation will be between 2,500 and 4,500 jobs. With glee the Tory government ministers tell us how Bill 103 will create an economic environment ripe for business, when in reality they are creating an economic nightmare for the hundreds of thousands of unemployed and underemployed workers in our municipalities. Once again, where are the jobs?

The UWC feels, in discussing the proposed amalgamation of our municipalities, that we ought to look at the impact of not only Bill 103 but also Bills 104 and 105. With the downloading of education and the offloading of the cost of welfare, child care, housing, long-term care and other social services on to the municipal property tax base when we already are suffering from a decreasing tax base, we can envision the economic environment the Tory government has in store for the people of Toronto. This horrific view is one of privatizing vital services, as well as massive cuts to those very services that the increasing numbers of unemployed and underemployed will desperately need. This is immoral and inhumane, and we ask, why is it not illegal to abandon men, women and children to a Tory legacy of abject poverty?

With the staggering number of bankruptcies and with large corporations and small businesses continuing to lay off their workforce, those workers are going to require more use of our social programs that are designed to redistribute income. These programs are funded from property taxes, which in periods of recession place a huge burden on the municipal property tax system. Combined with the municipalities' inability to borrow or find other sources of revenue, we can expect to see severe restrictions or elimination of those very social programs the unemployed and underemployed in our municipalities so desperately need.

The Unemployed Workers Council calls on the Tory government to immediately withdraw Bill 103 and work with the municipalities to put together a joint plan for the municipalities in the greater Toronto area; live up to your election promise of creating 725,000 jobs by immediately initiating a program of full employment for the people of Ontario; live up to your moral and economic responsibility to provide unemployed and underemployed workers with an income sufficient for a dignified life; and repeal all legislation and proposed legislation that creates

various forms of forced labour and the curtailment of civil liberties of unemployed and underemployed workers. Jobs must be at adequate wages and under humane and safe working conditions. We are demanding jobs or income now.

1130

**Mr Silipo:** I would like to say thank you to the presenters. I don't have any questions; the presentation is quite clear. I want to thank you for emphasizing the issue of jobs. It's one that others have touched on but I don't think any other group has really emphasized in the way you have. As you point out, one of the key findings in the government's own report, the KPMG study which they use as the basis for defending their actions, is that in order to find even the savings they want to find, we're going to see the initial loss of some 4,500 jobs. And that's just with the one measure; the others, as you've pointed out, go on.

I just want to thank you for coming forward and putting this information very clearly in front of us.

**The Chair:** Thank you for coming forward to make your presentation today.

#### WOMEN PLAN TORONTO

**The Chair:** Would Reggie Modlich please come forward. Good morning and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Reggie Modlich:** Thank you very much. My name is Reggie Modlich. The presentation will be given by Janet Forbes, who is the co-chairperson for Women Plan Toronto.

**Ms Janet Forbes:** Good morning. I'm pleased to be here. I had one of those interesting experiences that we all have from time to time; just before I tore out this morning my computer printer failed, which means I do not have a nicely prepared report to you. I am here to talk to you about the concerns of Women Plan Toronto.

It's quite a challenge to present anything this committee hasn't already heard over the last couple of weeks, which in itself is relevant, because I believe the people have been of one voice over their concerns about Bill 103. They've been primarily concerned about the haste with which this bill is being implemented and the fact that there does not seem to be any substantive reason for doing this. None of the reports that have been commissioned by the government seems to say definitively that there will be any real economic savings in doing this, so we are left to wonder what the government agenda is about, catering to the interests of a smaller group of privileged people who perceive that governments are about efficiencies? Governments aren't about efficiencies; they're about people.

As it is, Women Plan Toronto, along with the Committee on the Status of Women for the city of Toronto and the Older Women's Network, participated in preparing a declaration, the content of which was presented to you by a Status of Women representative. But some of the points they made in that presentation are important to review. Some 60% of the seniors in this city are women and 17% of the families in the city of Toronto are single-parent families, most of which are headed by women. These

groups are traditionally dependent far more on municipal services than other members of our community.

The provision of these services across the board without associated discrimination on the basis of economic policies is important. The fact that we provide recreation services without charge means that groups of our populace aren't ghettoized by their means to pay, that they can participate equally in the types of programs the city provides.

There is a tendency of this government to wish to segregate and ghettoize these people. The potential outcome of Bill 104, by restricting secure funding to teacher-in-the-classroom programs, has the potential of eliminating a great many of those programs that other people who can afford it then acquire through the provision of charter schools. These charter schools have the potential of leaving the public school system open only to those who cannot afford other.

Once again groups of people are being ghettoized within the city of Toronto.

Women have been traditionally ghettoized through their lack of economic wellbeing. This type of policy is against the commonweal of Canadians. The understanding that Canadians have long preserved is that the commonweal of the populace is more important than the privilege of a small group of people.

Women Plan Toronto has had two goals throughout its life. One is to ensure provision of services in a safe, healthy urban environment for women, and the second is to encourage women to go out and participate in achieving these things and to participate in the electoral process. Women traditionally have looked to local political processes as being their route into the power structure, for two good reasons: One is that it's difficult to go away to a Legislature hundreds of miles away from your home and your family; the second is the economic resources required to run for a Legislature.

I'm sure most of you here know how difficult it would be to run if you didn't have the economic resources behind you in the form of a political party. Does this mean we are looking at political parties in the city of Toronto? Does this mean we have to access this type of funding for people to be a representative on their school board or on their municipal government?

Briefly, I would like to make two more points. In the 1960s and the 1970s, we looked to mega public housing projects as a way to solve our housing crisis. They were considered to be modern and efficient. The passage of time has shown that this has not really worked. This is not to say that amalgamation in itself does not have possibilities. Women Plan Toronto members participated in the preparation of the Golden report and many of its recommendations are commendable, but the haste of this amalgamation process belies what happened in the Golden report. Despite what this government thinks, Bill 103 is not the Golden report and the many recommendations of the Golden report have not been put in place.

I would at this point like to comment on that little homily we all learned from our mothers, I'm sure, and many of us have experienced it in the practicality of our lives: Haste makes waste. I would like to suggest to this committee that yes, many of these things are possible, but

doing them this quickly is not appropriate to the well-being of the citizens of the Metropolitan Toronto cities.

**Mr Parker:** One of the comments we've heard from a number of presenters relates to community and the need to preserve community and some concern that Bill 103 might have an effect on our ability to preserve communities. I'm interested in your thoughts on that.

**Ms Modlich:** I'm really concerned that at the most basic level, at the smallest scale, we have advisory councils that can be handpicked in one way or can be funded, like Janet suggested, that party politics might well creep in. There is none of the power that's necessary for this new level of community council. I'm very concerned how ill defined that level, at this point, still is.

**Mr Parker:** Let me pick up on that one point, because you can help us. Right now, you're right, there is very little definition to the neighbourhood council that's commented on in the bill. What sort of vision would you have for a neighbourhood council?

**Ms Modlich:** I think it would need to be democratically elected. There needs to be an assurance as well that all groups are able to stand for these elections, not only those who have the funds to pay for campaigns. At the same time, I'm concerned that we will insert an additional level of government rather than reducing. Again, it's such a hasty, sudden proposal that we have not been able to digest or to discuss with each other to ensure, through a dialogue, that we have the best solution.

1140

**Mr Parker:** I appreciate that, but this part of it has not been hastily brought forward. The concept has been put out there for people to comment on and the ultimate decision will not be made until comments have been received. So I'm quite interested in your comments.

**Ms Forbes:** I think one of the important parts is, what power do these councils have? Are their recommendations going to be —

**Mr Parker:** That's what I'm asking you. What would you like?

**Ms Forbes:** If you're going through the process of having a council, it's important that the recommendations and the decisions it makes be enacted.

**Mr Parker:** I'm hearing two different messages from you. I'm hearing one say that you don't want another level of government, but I'm hearing you say that you want them to exercise some authority.

**Ms Forbes:** I'm not saying I want it; I'm not sure I agree with the idea at all. Our current forms of representation, with various committees operated by the cities that speak to local issues, aren't necessarily entrenched in an ongoing process; they're usually struck for a specific purpose, and when that purpose has been met they die. But if you entrench ongoing, continuous committees you may end up with another level of government. I'm just saying if this comes to pass it's really important that their recommendations have instatement power. There is no point in having people go out and put all that work into their community and not have their recommendations followed up on, because that's a really demoralizing process.

**The Chair:** Thank you, ladies, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

### JOE PANTALONE

**The Chair:** Would Joe Pantalone please come forward. Good morning, Mr Pantalone. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Joe Pantalone:** Thank you, Mr Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to present my thoughts on Bill 103 and related issues. I should mention that the perspective I bring to this matter is one of having been elected at the local level, the city of Toronto, for a number of years; having served for three years at both the local level of the city of Toronto and Metro Toronto; and for the last eight years I have been serving as a member of the Metropolitan Toronto council. You could say I have seen both levels of government work or have their challenge, as the case may be, but primarily work.

At the local level I have seen the complaints about very individual issues, such as obtaining a building permit, the need to fix the proverbial pothole in front of one's house or in one's laneway, come up and be solved. I have also seen at the local level the importance of implementing, after citizen consultation, things like zoning bylaws, the putting in place of local libraries to reflect local needs, local traffic plans and issues of wider implication. For example, in the early 1980s, the city of Toronto was instrumental in developing an AIDS program which was primarily a program of public education, which, as you know, has been emulated by others in government, be it at the municipal, provincial or federal level. That's to show that local government does work, not only in terms of local issues but also in terms of wider implications. In many ways it's where a lot of the ideas start and become popularized.

At the Metro regional level, the emphasis has always been on bigger-ticket items, be it public transit projects, with things like the Sheppard subway, as you know, up to \$1 billion; things like economic development, such as the \$180-million National Trade Centre being built at Exhibition Place, which will serve Toronto, Ontario and Canada well; as well as the multimillion-dollar annual contributions which Metro makes to the Metro Toronto Convention and Visitors Association and the arts in this city and province; also the importance of developing a social infrastructure which is regional in nature and which serves everybody, from the middle-class parent who has a child they need to put in a child care centre to somebody who needs a bed in the middle of a cold, blustery winter night in order to avoid passing away; or how to deliver policing in such a manner that the job gets done, while understanding Toronto's diverse communities.

All of us can think that this kind of constant public input has changed attitudes, if you will, in our society, and that's why we have a society which is widely admired.

I believe region-wide responsibilities are obviously fundamental. Things like safety, an efficient and affordable transportation system and provision of basic needs are what make an urban area livable or fail to make it so. I also believe the local level has a role to play which is equally fundamental. Where the government is making a mistake is in assuming it's an either/or situation.

The problem with amalgamating the local with the regional is that either the personal touch which every

resident requires will be lost or the regional planning won't happen. I know this since for three years, like I mentioned earlier, I served on both the local and the regional councils. Let me tell you, at that time I spent about 90% of my time on local issues, individual issues. There's nothing more pressing than a pink slip that says: "I've got a problem. Call me." Those tend to be very individual problems, like building permits, potholes and so forth.

Yet at the regional level, interestingly enough, we spent six to seven times the amount of the local council, yet I spent about 10% of my time doing it. Having the two tiers basically solved that problem by allowing us to give proper consideration and accountability.

There's no doubt that the system needs fine-tuning. Anybody who has been in it knows that. There's also no doubt it can be very irritating, the other level of government, depending where you are. I personally experienced it, as I'm sure everybody else has. But my basic premise is that the system is in need of fine-tuning; basically, it's not broken within Metropolitan Toronto.

Bill 103, in my view, is neither fish nor fowl. It neither establishes a truly regional government to look after the Toronto region, which is an organic whole, nor does it really deal with the local issues, because it's simply too big for that. A \$70-billion budget, dealing with all those issues, is simply too much.

What we really need is to fix the uncoordinated sprawl that has put artificial boundaries between the core of the Toronto urbanized area and its limbs, limbs which go by names like Mississauga, Brampton, Vaughan and so forth. This point has been made eminently clear many times, through the No Turning Back report which Metro council reported, the Golden task force report and so forth. The fundamental problem today is that Toronto has outgrown the statutory boundaries of the Metro council that was established to plan and manage its growth. Metro Toronto's boundaries are considerably smaller than the actual physical and economic size of Toronto, as No Turning Back says.

What are the consequences of this? The consequences are very grave. Metro taxpayers pay, for example, for services used by many others as well as its own citizens, things like the Metro Toronto Reference Library, which is a reference library for southern Ontario. We pay \$17 million out of our budget for that, and there's no contribution from the other parts outside of Metro. It's true the province provides \$1.6 million a year, I think, but it's far short of the \$17 million.

Things like the Gardiner Expressway, the Don Valley Parkway: As you know, they are used both by Metro residents and people outside of Metro, yet the cost is borne at the local level. Things like the Hummingbird Centre, the Canadian Opera Company: Metro provides major funding for that. Our citizens buy the tickets, as does somebody from Brampton or Mississauga; however, those millions of dollars for providing that have to be borne by our taxpayers.

That's the real problem, which I believe the board of trade presented in the hole-in-the-doughnut argument. Those are the issues which Bill 103 does not address, in my view.

Also, Metro services act as a magnet for people in need from other regions in the province. As a result, Metro taxpayers pay an unfair share of the bill. Metro, for example, has about 50% of the population of the GTA, yet it has 72% of its seniors and 66% of the households earning less than \$20,000 per year. Metro's welfare caseload in 1994 accounted for 36% of the provincial total, yet we had 25% of the provincial population. Those are basic facts. Collapsing the centre, the core, does not solve those problems, which were primarily core vis-à-vis Metro, vis-à-vis the outside regions.

The fact that the province is also moving forward to download more of the welfare bill, as well as the costs for family benefits assistance, long-term care, public health, public and non-profit housing, child care, and assessment delivery, is fundamentally wrong. In particular, the offloading of social services, according to the president of the board of trade, goes against the advice of every major study which has been done on this issue.

The net result is that the government's action is an additional burden which simply makes that initial load that much more unbearable. For example, you heard that the \$531 million that Metro residents are supposed to raise through property taxes represents a 15.6% tax increase across the board for every resident and business owner across Metro — 15.6%. That's assuming you spend the same amount of dollars. That is obviously unsupportable.

Furthermore, the introduction of actual value assessment is interesting. Even though it attempts to introduce certain equality, and often people mention the fact that people in Rosedale and Forest Hill will be paying their fair share, it's more than they who get affected. In my area, for example, under the previous figures of 1988 market values, 92% of my homeowners will get increases — 92%. Just count them. Yet in my area the average income is 22% less than the provincial average. The provincial average in 1991 was \$56,727; in my area it's \$43,974. The idea that people who are cleaners, construction workers and often people who work for minimum wage can afford a 15.6% tax increase, plus whatever the effect of the actual value assessment is, is simply absurd, simply breaking their backs.

**1150**

**The Chair:** Mr Pantalone, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap up. We're getting towards the end of time.

**Mr Pantalone:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. Being an elected official, sometimes I tend to add more to my script.

I'd like to conclude by saying that I've been in politics quite a few years. I think it's an honourable profession. Those of us who are in public service sometimes don't get the credit for that. We have an obligation to work together, regardless of political orientation, to try to reach what is best overall. I believe, however, that this amalgamation plan, and in particular the downloading on to the new city, will fundamentally damage one of the best cities in the world.

Today I'm asking the government members of the committee and every other member of the Legislature to think about that. Toronto is a great city that works. It is Ontario's capital as well as being the residence of many

of us. Its success is your success. Please stop the stampede which Bill 103 represents and find a better solution. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward and making your presentation this afternoon.

**PHILIP CREIGHTON**

**The Chair:** Will Roberta Corey please come forward. Oh, Philip Creighton replaces Roberta Corey, for the members' information.

**Mr Philip Creighton:** I'm sorry, Mr Chairman, that I make a very poor Roberta Corey.

**The Chair:** I can't say that. I've never seen Roberta Corey, so it's hard for me to judge.

**Mr Creighton:** I haven't either, sir.

I am interested in the process that takes the government of Ontario from Mr Harris's 1994 Fergus statement to Bill 103, the City of Toronto Act, 1996. Thank you, Mr Chairman and members of the committee, for this opportunity to talk with you.

Mr Harris reportedly said: "I disagree with restructuring because it believes that bigger is better. Services always cost more in larger municipalities." Bill 103 will create by far the largest municipality in the province, a megacity, at least by Ontario standards. How was this remarkable reversal achieved?

In the Common Sense Revolution, much is made of the proposed reduction in the number of provincial members of the Legislature, although the resulting savings are not large. Very little is said about municipalities, except some sound advice that the government is not following: "We will sit down with municipalities to discuss ways of reducing government entanglement and bureaucracy with an eye to eliminating waste and duplication as well as unfair downloading by the province."

Perhaps we can take it as a faith statement, devoutly believed by the members of the government, that fewer politicians always equal greater savings. Other than faith, and perhaps arrogance, there seems little support for Bill 103. There is no business plan. There is no cost-benefit analysis. Apparently, there isn't even a complete listing of the costs involved in the downloading of social programs and the amalgamation of Toronto, let alone credible dollar estimates. There are no impact studies. The stakeholders weren't effectively consulted. The anticipated savings range from the improbable to the purely fanciful. But I need not go on. It is sufficient to note that little of the research and analysis that a prudent planner would require exists for the proposed amalgamation of Toronto. Sure, there are lots of studies around, but effective planning requires that your financial plan correspond to your proposal, not somebody else's.

If not faith, then perhaps arrogance is the real father of Bill 103. The government appears to have adopted an arrogant style of governance, I presume as a matter of policy. At the risk of overgeneralizing, the government picks a simplistic solution to a problem without serious study of the consequences of its actions. It uses legislation that seeks to insulate it from those consequences and relies heavily on ministerial discretion. It denigrates its

opponents, limits discussion and uses a tight deadline. It takes charge.

I have been a chartered accountant all my working life in Toronto. I was actually born in East York but I didn't stay there long. I have noticed that many business people, particularly professionals, are often impatient with and frustrated by the bean counters: the economists and accountants. I understand that some members of the Ontario government, by simple inspection of the financial statements of the Metro-area municipalities, can predict that the Toronto amalgamation is going to be a success.

Then there is the KPMG study. I doubt if anyone, even the authors, believes in its "may be savings" any more. But even management consultants can do little with weak assumptions, little time, and if they are kept from talking to anyone who might understand the problem. But why was the KPMG study thought necessary? The government apparently assumed that substantial savings would make amalgamation popular. It was so clearly an afterthought. I presume that the government went outside because it had downsized its staff below the competence level. It did not have enough staff free to do a special project. It is a common problem with businesses that have been heavily re-engineered.

The shortage of staff resulting from downsizing has plagued the government. Too few sales tax auditors result in lapsed assessments. The Attorney General's family support payment system takes months to get payments from one parent to another, let alone catch the deadbeat dads. The Ministry of Transportation is reduced to holding photo opportunities for the Toronto Sun as a substitute for weigh stations in full operation to keep truck tires secure. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs can't deliver a clean voters' list to Toronto for its referendum. Savings are certainly super, but service is nice too.

I don't think it matters much whether it's arrogance or lack of staff that prevented the necessary cost-benefit analysis of the Toronto amalgamation being prepared. It was not done. If the government members were putting their own assets at risk without any plan, I would think them stupid or ignorant. But they are not using their cash; they are playing with yours and mine.

The major asset of many families is their house. I use individuals here rather than businesses because it's easier to see the consequences in a simple case. We can't know the probable outcome of Bill 103 because no serious study has been undertaken. However, let's assume that amalgamation is a success, even after \$400 million in one-time costs and three-plus years of administrative chaos. What benefit can the property owner expect? At best, somewhat lower municipal taxes; at least, the Treasurer of Ontario has said they are going down. As Toronto is now reputed to be the most livable city in North America, slightly lower taxes are not likely to do much for property values except maintain them.

But assume that amalgamation and downloading produce a rotten-core city. Then the downside risk to property values becomes substantial, far greater than the corresponding upside advantage from successful amalgamation, because property values are so high to start with. In Bill 103 and its attendant social program download, what are we getting? A modest upside, a downside so big

it is scary, and all because our government will not do its homework and has blind faith in its own decisions. What can we call its action other than reckless and wilful?

1200

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you for coming down and making a presentation to our committee. You have mentioned quite a few things that we have heard from other people as well. We have now another report from another financial consultant saying that there are no savings to be expected from this amalgamation. Many people have said we should study the entire situation all over again. We have heard that yes, some trimming needs to be done, but we don't have to cut down the tree completely.

Do you think the government is going to listen to the majority of the people within Metro and allow more time, pull the bill back, negotiate with the six mayors and with the people who are going to be affected? Do you think the government should do that?

**Mr Creighton:** Obviously the government should do it, but I wonder if its style will permit it to do it. It has adopted a confrontational style, and it's evidently willing to proceed with no study. It is the no study that gets me.

**Mr Sergio:** I can see that you're getting all wrapped up. It's the style, it's the process and it's the arrogance, as you have said.

Let me say this. I didn't want to ask you this question, but let me do it. A couple of days ago a judge in Scarborough did quash the appointment of the three trustees. Even with all that, we have the minister, Mr Leach, saying: "Don't worry about it. When we approve the legislation, we will reappoint them." What's the matter with this government, with this minister here? Can't they see what they are doing to the people? He's so arrogant to say: "It doesn't matter. We still are going to push ahead. We're going to approve it, and then we can reappoint and give them the power." What do you think of this attitude of the government, instead of listening to the people?

**Mr Creighton:** I am an old man, and I have lived through Leslie Frost, John Robarts, Bill Davis. I am surprised at the government. I cannot say myself that I have voted Conservative since the second administration of the late, lamented Mr Diefenbaker, but this does not seem to be the Ontario that I grew up in.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Creighton, for coming forward today and making your presentation.

#### ENGIN ISIN

**The Chair:** Will Engin Isin please come forward. Before we start, Mr Isin, I have a feeling that the bells calling us to vote in the House are going to start ringing any minute now. Go ahead, Mr Isin. It will be a five-minute bell if we do get one, so we'll start anyway.

**Dr Engin Isin:** I thank you for the opportunity to speak before the committee, though I wish we didn't have to face each other in a 10-minute monologue. My name is Engin Isin. I am a professor of social science and urban studies at York University, and an immigrant and a recent proud Canadian citizen.

My field of expertise is constitutional law and municipal government in Canada, the United States and Great

Britain. Over the years I have examined and interpreted hundreds of city charters and acts of municipal incorporation reaching back to the 12th century. Among the most memorable charters I have read and examined are London in 1130, Kingston-Upon-Hull in 1440, New York City in 1664, Saint John in 1785 and Montreal in 1832. I mention these dates because I want to give you a sense that an act of incorporation of a city has a long history in Anglo-Saxon law, to which our jurisdiction is an heir.

Constitutional scholars often regard this long history as a seamless web and take pleasure in pointing out that whatever social and cultural differences may separate London in the 12th century from Montreal in the 19th, they are likely to have very similar clauses in their charters. It is not as though nothing changes. Since London received its charter there have been the Glorious Revolution in the 17th century, the American and French revolutions in the 18th century, the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century and the Russian and Velvet revolutions in the 20th century. Yet law changes very slowly and checks the excesses of revolutions. It seems law maintains continuity while allowing reasonable change.

We have now about a 500-year history of creating municipal corporations in Anglo-Saxon law and 200 years of creating them in Canada. What can we make of Bill 103 within this legal and constitutional history? I wish to address that question.

**The Chair:** Mr Isin, we'll address that question as soon as we get back from the vote. We'll just recess until after the vote. Thank you.

*The committee recessed from 1206 to 1218.*

**The Chair:** Mr Isin, you can resume. You have just a little more than eight minutes to go. Sorry for the interruption.

**Dr Isin:** As I was saying, the question I wish to address is, what can one make of Bill 103 within the context of this legal and constitutional history? I want to note, however, I'm here to address Bill 103, not the idea of amalgamation. I want to make a clear distinction between Bill 103 and the idea of amalgamation because within the established practices of constitutional law there are several hundred ways of amalgamating. Bill 103 is one of them and I want to address that particular manner.

An unusual aspect of Bill 103 is that it does not create a new city as much as it dissolves the current municipal system. It leaves many issues, such as the duties, powers and structure of the new city, to further legislation. Instead, it focuses on the transition between the dissolution of the old municipal system and the creation of the new city. From a legal point of view the question arises whether it is prudent to dissolve a complex municipal system before the duties, powers and the structure of the new city are actually determined. From a political point of view, the question also arises whether it is wise to leave so many aspects of the new city to two appointed bodies.

Bill 103 seems to solve the political problem of dissolving a complex municipal system without articulating the legal and political functions of the new city by conferring extraordinary powers to the minister, the board of trustees and the transition team. This move has, in my view, severe consequences. Bill 103 radically departs

from several constitutional and legal norms and customs concerning the Canadian law of municipal corporations.

I will focus on four such anomalies and departures. The first one is the powers present in the bill without precedent. Section 2(5) confers on the new city every power and duty of an old municipality or old council. However, the powers vested in the minister in section 24, the board of trustees in section 9(4) and the transition team in section 16(4) can technically undermine and redefine these powers without the knowledge of the Legislature. In other words, Bill 103 not only wrests power from the electors by establishing the board of trustees and the transition team as appointed bodies corporate, as it has been pointed out before; it also wrests power from and absolves responsibility of the provincial Legislature towards the new city.

Section 9(4)(g), for example, leaves it open that the minister can prescribe the board of trustees any other duties not expressed in the bill. Similarly, sections 9(5), 9(6), and 9(7) confer extraordinary powers to the board by leaving terms such as "guidelines" and "documents" open to interpretation. Finally, section 9(9) is also extraordinary in that the board is empowered to define its own functions to create a bureaucracy outside the control of the Legislature.

In my presentation I list several other clauses and sections in the bill that I believe are without precedent. Nevertheless, section 24 is the one that I want to focus on in the next minute. For all the provisions in the bill, it's perhaps the most extraordinary. It empowers the minister to impose conditions on the exercise of powers of the existing councils and boards. It also empowers the minister to expand the duties of both the board of trustees and the transition team, which are in effect corporate bodies.

In other words, once it becomes law, the minister will have powers that are both beyond judicial review as well as Legislative review. Among these powers is, as stated in section 24(1)(f), to "define any word or expression used in this act that has not already been expressly defined in this act," which effectively appoints the minister as the king of the new city.

The second issue I want to raise is indeterminacy and imprecision of several clauses in the bill. Section 9(10) states, "On or after January 31, 1998, the minister may, by order, dissolve the board of trustees." Also, a similar section, 16(12), states the same thing for the transition team. In the context of the extraordinary powers already vested in these two bodies and in the minister to redefine and expand their duties, these sections are simply very dangerous. The indeterminacy of these clauses creates opportunities for political manipulation.

Similarly, the imprecision of section 16(4)(a), which states that the transition team will "consider what further legislation may be required to implement this act, and make detailed recommendations to the minister," is dangerous. In effect, this clause, when read carefully, accepts the insufficiency of the bill as an act of incorporation but vests powers in the transition team to supplement this insufficiency. From a legal point of view, I can't emphasize enough how much this may create several messy scenarios for the government.

The third issue I want to raise is the issue of trust. Bill 103 introduces a few clauses where an open distrust is displayed towards the existing councils and boards it dissolves. Sections 9(6), 9(7), 16(5) and 16(6), for example, legislate the cooperation of the members, the employees and agents of the old municipalities and their boards. These sections also legislate the existing municipalities to honour the requests of the board of trustees and the transition team for information and new documents.

These sections are exceptionally detailed in a bill that hardly spells out the duties and powers of the new city. Obviously, the government anticipates a resistance to the bill from the existing municipalities. This raises two thorny questions.

First, should one level of government display such distrust towards another level? To this question, the minister responded publicly by stating that the government would rather be safe than sorry. However, are there not enough checks and balances in our legal system, including the acts of access to information, to ensure appropriate transition? The second question follows from the first. Does not this mistrust reveal and catch a government introducing a takeover bill? In other words, if anyone had any doubt about the true intent of the bill not to create a new city but to dissolve the current municipal system, they need not examine any other section than those mentioned, 9(6) 9(7), 16(5) and 16(6).

The fourth issue I want to raise is the issue of boundaries and communities, which has been raised so far in connection with size, but I'm going to make a separate and different point. Bill 103 introduces a peculiar and, in my view, a dangerous provision of modelling city wards after federal and provincial electoral boundaries. I don't think the drafters of the bill have given enough thought to this.

The bill proposes to divide the city into 44 wards based on the new 22 federal electoral districts. To understand why I think this practice sets a dangerous precedent, it is important to state that political representation in English law has always been of communities — territorial units sharing, in so far as possible, some unity of interest. This principle of representation of community can be traced to the origins of Parliament as an institution in the fourteenth century. The King summoned individuals to represent a specific town or borough, and the parliament was an assembly of such men. By participating in the parliament, these communities and the King accepted their reciprocal obligations.

By the 19th century, representation by population replaced the principle of representation of community in federal and state elections. The drawing of artificial boundaries to apportion comparable numbers of people in electoral districts or ridings became throughout representative democracies the principal means of representation. The reasons for this shift are complex. At any rate, from the point of view of municipal law, the significance of this is that municipal corporations historically maintained the principle of community interest. The ward system in many cities and towns is as much as a districting system for representation as it respects neighbourhoods and communities.

I want to conclude with a recommendation and a concluding remark. In my view, Bill 103 is a frenzied document. It is anomalous with regard to established legal norms of dissolution, annexation and amalgamation of municipal corporations in this jurisdiction. The bill creates not a new city, as is its ostensible objective, but a provincial board. Bill 103 is not, in my view, an act of incorporation. Among the bases for this anomaly are the Saving and Restructuring Act and the Better Local Government Act, which made it possible for the government to sidestep established juridical practices with respect to amalgamation and dissolution in this jurisdiction.

In my view, the recent ruling of the Ontario Divisional Court judge with respect to the legality of the transition team being appointed the day of the bill being introduced is only the beginning of a long and arduous legal battle that will be fought in the courts over this bill.

The bill therefore is fraught with more difficulties than the minister or the government would care to admit. In my view, the judicious course of action is to withdraw the bill, wait until other government policies such as on provincial-municipal finance and the GTA structure and responsibilities become more clear, and submit a new bill to a process as set out in the Municipal Act and the Municipal Boundary Negotiations Act, thereby involving the electorate and possibly the Ontario Municipal Board in creating a new city.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Isin, for your presentation. You've gone quite a bit beyond your allotted time but I thought that was only fair considering the interruptions you had to put up with. I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming forward and making your presentation.

We're recessed until 3:30.

*The committee recessed from 1230 to 1536.*

#### CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR CIVIC AFFAIRS IN NORTH YORK

**The Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Could Colin Williams please come forward. Mr Williams, welcome to the committee.

**Mr Colin Williams:** My name is Colin Williams. I'm the president of the Concerned Citizens for Civic Affairs in North York. On my left is Terence Sawyer, who is a member of the executive committee of the organization.

We'd like to thank the committee for receiving us so that we may make a presentation with respect to Bill 103. We appear before you on behalf of the Concerned Citizens for Civic Affairs in North York. Our executive has discussed the bill and is inclined to favour it. It offers the potential for reducing duplication in such areas as traffic engineering where the divided responsibility and the buck-passing make good transportation planning more difficult.

We are concerned with the decision to download more of the social support costs without municipal access to appropriate tax resources. We would like municipalities to have access, through requisition upon the province, to income and other taxes raised from citizens in the municipality. However, this is beyond Bill 103 and so in

this presentation we wish to offer suggestions with respect to the democratic aspects of the bill.

Our suggestions are in three areas: nurturing our neighbourhoods; funding of municipal election campaigns; access to privatized municipal information and data protection for personal information held in privatized municipal information systems.

As has been pointed out, this bill is not people-empowering in some of its tendencies. Our aim is to suggest that amendments could be made which would counter these tendencies but not impair the central thrust of the bill. Lincoln, in his Gettysburg address, summed up the democratic ideal with the phrase "of the people, by the people, for the people." Clearly, the bill envisages less "by the people." Some claim there is less "for the people."

One of the weaknesses of the bill is that it reduces citizen representation. On the other hand, in section 5 it leaves the door open a little for the introduction of some democratic balance. It provides for neighbourhood committees but is silent as to the purpose or structure of these committees. In its present form this section is redundant, as it gives no new power or duty to the new city. Cities have formed committees for various purposes from time immemorial.

**Nurturing the neighbourhoods:** What is needed in section 5 is some guidance as to what the committees are intended to do and by what process the committees are to be formed. The government leaflet One Toronto for All of Us has an excellent, even poetic section "Nurturing our Neighbourhoods." However, it does not identify the US or Canadian cities which have used the neighbourhood committees or describe those cases which have succeeded or failed.

What is needed in the bill are some principles which would guide this experiment in democracy. In our view these committees will only be successful if they are truly representative. The mechanism proposed for Hamilton-Wentworth clearly fails, as it envisages appointment by councillors. Further conditions for success are that the committees be given something meaningful to do and adequate secretarial resources to do their work.

Thus the committees would be empowered to make decisions on matters of local concern. The committees would provide advice on larger matters, and when grouped into larger communities, provide a recognized citizen voice with respect to such issues as the level of municipal services to be provided in the larger area. Such decisions would of course involve a higher tax relative to the higher service level. Thus we are asking that you consider replacing the vacuous section 5 with something that reflects the spirit of the "Nurturing our Neighbourhoods" section of One Toronto for All of Us.

Typically, municipalities form various boards or advisory committees and use nominating committees to staff these bodies. The new councillor soon learns that other considerations than merit play too large a role in the selection process. In North York, certain committee members have become perennials. Citizens deserve something better. We would advocate that no person serve on a neighbourhood committee for more than four years.

Some more open process is needed, perhaps a neighbourhood town hall or a random selection from a list of volunteers. The councillor should be an ex officio member of the committee, but not the chair.

"Nurturing our Neighbourhoods" sketches the role of such committees. It is, in our view, essential that the committees not be purely advisory. Citizens already have channels to advise their elected representatives. Functions which might be assigned to these bodies would include local traffic regulation, minor variances and other matters dealt with by a committee of adjustment — curb cuts, closing road allowances and things of that sort.

**The funding of municipal elections:** We turn now to another important aspect of the democratic process. It has long been known that municipal election campaigns have been largely funded by the development industry and by municipal contractors. We regret the absence of anything in this bill to democratize this process. As with hockey, Quebec can teach us something here. They have the simple rule that only an elector may contribute to a campaign fund. Corporations are not electors; foreign citizens are not electors.

Finally, I'd like to turn to protection of privacy and access to information. The KPMG study envisages that savings to municipal funds could be obtained by privatizing and thus down-waging. We urge this committee to extend the protection of privacy and access to information legislation to municipal data held by contracting organizations so that there's similar protection for these organizations as in the existing municipal administration. These are in our view important elements of any democratic regime.

To sum up, we recommend the bill be amended so that the neighbourhood committees be representative of the people in the neighbourhood; that neighbourhood committees be assigned real responsibility with respect to the neighbourhood; that city elections be funded by city electors; that access to municipal information and the protection of personal information be extended.

We thank the committee for listening to us.

**Mr Hastings:** Gentlemen, how would you provide for or ensure, aside from just making an amendment to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the extent of personal information under municipal data, given that we already have access to it under land titles administration with Teranet? The two previous governments started it. There was supposed to be some tendering back in 1990. I think if you use the Internet, you can find out where you live, sir, how much your property is appraised at etc under land titles through Teranet that was sold by two previous administrations. How are you going to get that back? How are you going to actually protect, which I think is a good idea?

**Mr Williams:** I'm glad you're supportive of this proposal. The arrangements you speak of I believe were arrangements made by a former provincial government and thus not within the ambit of some municipal legislation.

**Mr Hastings:** You wouldn't specifically want this government to amend freedom of information and privacy? I think to some extent municipal data of a personal nature is already under the act.

**Mr Williams:** Where that information is held by the municipality, there is protection at the present time, but this bill could involve, further down the road, the holding of this information by private corporations. It's important that the protection of the law should apply to these data, as well as data held by the municipality itself.

**The Chair:** Thank you, gentlemen, for coming forward to make your presentation today.

### GOVERNOR'S BRIDGE RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

**The Chair:** Would Penny Pepperell please come forward. Good afternoon. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Penny Pepperell:** My name is Penny Pepperell and I am president of the Governor's Bridge Ratepayers Association in East York. The association, representing 150 homes, both rental apartments and single-family homes, has been active in community issues, including the Leslie Street extension, Redway Road and the safe passage of trains through our neighbourhood.

We are particularly proud of our involvement in the plan for subdivision on the Bayview ghost site, located on the Bayview extension south of Nesbitt Drive. We were able to reduce the size of the proposed development from 913 apartment units to 64 single-family homes. As a result of the hard work of all the stakeholders, Governor's Bridge Estates, as the project is called, promises to be neighbourhood-friendly, environmentally friendly and a highly desirable place to live, and the association is solidly behind it. I mention this to show it is possible for a ratepayers' group to support redevelopment and intensification projects in its immediate neighbourhood, even projects more than one third of its own size.

Our association is involved in many issues that have little to do with ratepaying. Recently, one of our members was instrumental in extending the lease of a local store. I have been involved in fairly lengthy communication with the borough about traffic matters, in addition to organizing public information meetings on megacity issues. At the moment our association is in the process of raising \$30,000 for a lookout station at the Brickworks, a Metro conservation project. I communicate with the membership by newsletters dropped off door to door, three since January.

I want to confine my remarks to the contents and the lack of them in Bill 103, and make a few modest suggestions.

To begin with, the neighbourhood committees. In section 5 the bill reads, "The city council shall, by bylaw, establish neighbourhood committees and determine their functions." Further on, it stipulates that the transition team will hold public consultations on "the functions to be assigned to neighbourhood committees and the method of choosing their members." Not explained is why neighbourhood committees have to be considered at all.

Any body that stands between our members and our elected representatives is an impediment. I have been elected president of the Governor's Bridge Ratepayers Association and I don't want to have my communications filtered through a volunteer/appointed/elected/it-doesn't-matter-how-they-got-there committee. Second-best, I want to talk to assistants to my elected representatives.

Therefore, I would like to suggest that the transition team get out of the business of deciding the makeup and function of neighbourhood committees and instead acknowledge the importance of existing ratepayers' and other neighbourhood groups.

1550

In East York ratepayers' groups receive regular communications from the borough on all matters concerning council meetings and committee of adjustment hearings as a matter of course. If Bill 103 stipulated that groups, ratepayers or otherwise are integral to the fabric of local government and should be notified regarding matters affecting their members — work it in any way you like — it would enhance the democratic process and go a long way to making the new city more acceptable to a large group of people.

Another reason to delete neighbourhood committees from the bill is that it carries the implication that consultations might perhaps be limited to these bodies, which would be unfortunate. There are an extraordinary number of groups in the city worth hearing from: bird-watching groups, dog-walking groups, people who track underground rivers, people who clean up the ravines of garbage in the spring, people who monitor traffic violations at their local corner, block parents and business improvement associations and many others.

Together, these are the city's monitoring stations, producing regular audits on the health and livability of the city. If keeping in touch with these groups is more than a councillor can handle, perhaps we should have more councillors, or perhaps we should have more staff, which raises another reason why I don't like these neighbourhood committees: I suspect some people will regard them as a cheap substitute for a good constituency secretary.

Flipping this over, community councils aren't mentioned in the act and they ought to be. According to a speech given the Minister of Municipal Affairs, community councils are comprised of seven or eight wards, each ward having a representative on council and each council having a chair who will sit on an executive committee chaired by the mayor. The purpose of these smaller bodies is to address issues like planning, day care, libraries and building permits. "It's not in the best interests of anyone to have west end planning decisions made by a committee of east end councillors," said the Minister of Municipal Affairs on December 17, 1996. Why, then, aren't community councils mentioned in the act where we can get at them? If the minister is concerned that west end planning issues shouldn't be made by east enders, an excellent point, why isn't this reflected in Bill 103?

If there is some higher good involved in amalgamation, East York might be worth giving up, but it is a terrible risk and we have to know what higher good would be served. Right now, East York is a ratepayers' heaven, providing accountable and accessible elected officials and a penny-pinching, socially conservative government. East York has the lowest crime rate in the city because its bylaws prohibit the sex trade from setting up shop there. Can we hang on to these bylaws in this new city?

Thank you for the opportunity to make this deputation.

**Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North):** Thank you, Ms Pepperell. I think it's an excellent presentation. I presume one of the things you pointed out here is the contradiction of the minister saying one thing and doing another, and also the lack of democracy, the hurried way, that is so evident in this process. What are your feelings about slowing it down, since they want to destroy and reconstruct this megacity? Would you feel that by slowing it down and having some more participation we may have some real democracy, building a community by the people for the people?

**Ms Pepperell:** Certainly, but slowing it down doesn't necessarily get us into a better position. I was reflecting yesterday on a recent trip I made to Washington and how wonderful it is to see people's beliefs and thoughts inscribed in stone in Washington. It's something Americans do very well. They're prepared to stand by and put their actions up against their words. I think this Bill 103 is bloodless. It is a skeletal kind of bill. If there is a real purpose, if it's supposed to increase accountability as I understand it is purported to do, I would like to see that written in the act. It needs a preamble. It needs flesh on it. It needs something you can grab hold of. It is a very strange read, as it stands.

**Mr Curling:** Does this destroy the ratepayers association as it is now? What importance do you feel it would have after this new megacity process is in place? Do you see a role at all for ratepayers associations?

**Ms Pepperell:** Oh, absolutely. There will always be a role for ratepayers, but one of the satisfactions of being the president of a ratepayers association, and it doesn't have a great many, is that I have on the other side people who listen and respond to me. There is a thrill that you get when you talk to an elected official. That's just one of the few highs I've got. Otherwise, I'm just dropping off flyers up and down icy driveways and not getting calls I want to get. That contact is so critical to maintaining the effort, and being heard and feeling that you can make an impact on your environment.

I want to see this thing work. I am deeply distressed by the divisiveness that has happened in our city around this issue and I would like to do what I can to bridge some sort of gaps. But yes, ratepayers will continue to be important but they have to find elected officials who will listen to them. Otherwise, they'll just dissolve.

**Mr Curling:** Will you and your organization be voting in the referendum? Has that been put forward by your community?

**Ms Pepperell:** I have not presented a position on the referendum to my members. It's a subject of great torment and I wouldn't hope, in a sense, to interfere with that. I know what people feel, I know what I feel, but I don't feel that I can represent my membership in a position on the referendum.

**Mr Curling:** Will you personally be voting?

**Ms Pepperell:** I personally have voted, yes.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Pepperell, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

#### CHARLOTTE MORGAN

**The Chair:** Would Charlotte Morgan please come forward. Good afternoon. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Charlotte Morgan:** My name is Charlotte Morgan. I'm here as a long-time resident of the city of Toronto. I very much appreciate the opportunity to come here today and address the committee with regard to Bill 103.

As I said, I've lived in Toronto since 1966 and have raised two sons here. Both Thomas and Ian appreciate living in this wonderful city as much as I do. Toronto is a safe, beautiful, cultured, commercial and diverse community that has nurtured me and my family.

I am going to talk about the balance of heart and mind that has made Toronto one of the very best places in the world to live, by anyone's standard. I can't remember exactly what it was that first sparked my interest in municipal affairs. It could have been the opening of our new city hall and the debate around Henry Moore's Archer and its placement in the square. Certainly around that time I became aware of the pride and deep sense of ownership that many Torontonians felt for their city and that tended to find its focus in our new civic building. I remember there were people who loved the building and people who spoke of it less enthusiastically. Everyone, however, knew it belonged to them.

Over the years, Torontonians have taken their city hall to their hearts. We've pushed open those big wooden doors and applied for parking and permits to picnic in our parks. We've been married here. We've visited our city councillors and listened to land use debates. We've used the main council chambers for meetings of our own associations. We've celebrated the new year in our square, and enjoyed skating on the ice rink and drinking hot chocolate in the frosty air.

Our city hall is the civic extension of our family lives. That's why, for me and for many Torontonians, city hall enjoys a very special place in our hearts, far more than this provincial Legislature or the impressive buildings on Ottawa's Parliament Hill. This is a fierce emotional attachment and one that I am prepared to defend. I have never before, for example, felt driven to appear before a legislative committee to speak in this manner. Today, it seems imperative that I do so.

I believe, in talking about the emotional attachment I feel for my city, I risk alienating those who may believe the world must be governed totally by reason, efficiency and by strict attention to the bottom line. I put it to you, however, that if you take the heart out of this city, nothing will be left but a façade. The very lifeblood that has made our town what it is today will have drained away. The many and various things we all value, including the commercial investment, will simply dry up and disappear. Who will want to be part of a city without a heart?

A little extreme, you think? In fact, the heart of the new megacity might become the present city's downtown core. What then of the hearts of the cities of York, Scarborough, North York, Etobicoke and Canada's only borough, East York? While I cannot speak for them, I believe that alienation will be real and pervasive for their citizens, and with alienation comes despair and decay. They will speak for themselves on March 3.

1600

The issues of the heart are both real and symbolic. They must never be taken lightly. Any organization or

entity that has lost its heart has fallen into decline. The risk is very high that this is what would happen here too.

I want to say that the threat to this city and to its citizens has been an act of incredible and unthinking brutality that says legions about its promoters. I'm really hurt that Al Leach, my Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, seems to think I'm only here because I have nothing better to do with my time. I can assure Mr Leach that I do, although in a democracy I shouldn't feel I have to defend myself in this way. My active participation in civic life should be welcomed and encouraged, not scorned and scoffed at.

I say to Mr Leach, the fact that this government has the might to arbitrarily enact Bill 103 and amalgamate Metro against the will of its citizens does not give it the moral authority to do so. Even as Mr Leach belittles those who are taking time out from their busy lives to speak out against his megacity, he points to the proposed volunteer community committees as possible sources of citizen involvement with Metro's mega-government.

In Mr Leach's mind, voluntarism must now replace elected politicians and staff. Many citizens already sit on community committees, ranging from school councils to arts groups to social service agencies and housing cooperatives. In every case, the support of paid staff and access to governance is imperative. In matters of civic governance, it probably won't be long before those community councils petition the city for substantial budgets and staff time. Undoubtedly, some councils will be more active and powerful than others. Inequities, which even now can be seen across the city, will become more visible.

Emotionally, this act is a bankrupt piece of legislation. But can it be defended logically? The logic in support of Bill 103 seems to fall into two categories — becoming more efficient and saving money — no matter what the cost. The question is, will the megacity be more efficient than the current model of six cities and one Metro council? The answer lies, I've been assured, in the many reports that have been written over the years on the amalgamation of Metro. Unfortunately, not one study suggests the particular formula that this government is pushing forward.

Many prominent MPPs who are speaking strongly in favour of Bill 103 seem not to know this. For example, Anne Golden, in the *Globe and Mail* of Saturday, February 15, was forced to contradict Steve Gilchrist, MPP for Scarborough East, when he said the government was promoting the recommendations of the Golden report. It's more than a little alarming that Mr Gilchrist should have done so little research about an issue of this magnitude and of which he's such a powerful supporter.

Could it be that having fewer politicians will make the process more efficient? At the moment, I have two representatives: a city councillor and a Metro councillor. In the megacity, I believe I will have one councillor. Not only will I lose the services of the other councillor, and presumably that councillor's staff, but the remaining councillor will have to deal with most of the things that formerly two councillors dealt with. Fewer people doing more work means less service. That doesn't sound very efficient to me. In fact, it sounds like backlog and chaos,

rather like what has happened to our court and family support systems.

As there is scant evidence to suggest that the megacity will be more efficient, let's look at the evidence that it will save me money. If there is such evidence, where is it? At best, the government has declared that at the end of the day and after all the uploading and downloading, this amalgamation will be a wash. It's hard to credit the common sense that would cause all this turmoil simply to create a wash.

I don't think it will be a wash. I believe the megacity will cost me money. For example, what will happen if thousands of useful civic jobs are eliminated and the unfortunate people who are downsized cannot find work? First they will go on unemployment insurance, then on welfare. Then we get to hate them. It's a grand scheme, but it won't save money.

Will it be more efficient for land development purposes? Perhaps, but not certainly. It seems likely that the land in a city that has lost its heart and where taxes likely will rise to meet the needs of the unemployed will be much less sought-after than land in a vibrant and confident city. Once the checks and balances inherent in our current planning system are swept away in the name of efficiency, poor decisions will not be far behind.

Finally, much has been said during this debate about the nature of democracy and the various ways in which Bill 103 has attacked the process. These issues are both emotional and logical. I am deeply attached to the democratic process. In addition, I have been told repeatedly that democracy is what separates those countries that enjoy good government from those that suffer under bad government.

Logically, it follows that I am not in favour of decreasing my representation through eliminating politicians. The politicians I know have a high sense of civic duty and, although we do not always agree, they hear what I have to say. Working through the democratic process may take time, but unless you hold the millennial belief that the end of history really is near, time is something we do have on our side.

I was deeply insulted and angered when trustees who were above the law were appointed to oversee the actions of my elected representatives. As a citizen of Toronto, I thoroughly objected to being protected in this way. It was extremely patronizing, offensive and, as has recently been confirmed, unlawful.

I began by talking about the balance of heart and mind that has made Toronto one of the best places in the world to live. In fact, I believe that it is the active emotional engagement of Toronto's citizens with civic life that has been the most important ingredient in making this city one of the most livable on the planet. Eliminating the level of government that is closest to the people attacks the very foundations of our society.

In attempting to balance my emotional reaction against the violation that is known as Bill 103 with arguments of logic and reason, I find that my provincial government has not made the case that a megacity will be a better place to live, has not made the case that a megacity will save money, has not made the case that a megacity will be more efficient and has not made the case that my democratic right to representation will be protected.

There is still time to do the right thing. I urge you to scrap Bill 103.

Thank you for listening to me today.

**The Chair:** Mr Silipo, you have a quick minute.

**Mr Silipo:** Thank you, Ms Morgan, for your presentation. I just have one quick question to you. Government members, in reacting to presentations similar to yours, would say or have said on some occasions: "What's the big deal? At the end of the day, what's so magical about these boundaries that we have now, these artificial boundaries," as they would say, "that causes you and others to get so upset about this? At the end of the day, you're still going to have an ability to elect your representatives, you're still going to have an ability to hire and fire them, as you think is fit, so what's all this excitement about?" I wonder if you could respond to that.

**Ms Morgan:** I think citizens do have a very strong attachment to their local neighbourhoods. I can't believe that if the city hall was moved to Toronto, which I hope is where it would be, the citizens of East York or of North York would have the very same attachment and the same involvement with the civic process that happens when the government is centralized in people's communities the way it is today.

I also feel that the people in Scarborough and North York fought very hard to have some kind of central government and some kind of identification with place and purpose in their own communities, and now those are about to be wrenched from them. If I was in those communities, I would be very upset by that.

**The Chair:** Thank you for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee today.

#### JEFF STEINER

**The Chair:** Would Jeff Steiner please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Steiner. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jeff Steiner:** My name is Jeff Steiner and I'm a citizen who lives and works downtown in the city of Toronto. I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak and to thank you all for the hard work that you've been doing on this matter. I am sure it is not easy to sit and listen day after day and to consider this matter in such great detail. I will keep my remarks brief and focus on just a few issues that surround the question of municipal amalgamation.

Let me say at the outset the time for change is long overdue. Every so often it is essential to re-examine our institutions and to re-engineer them. As years go by, institutions, whether they be governments or corporations, develop a culture which can become very inward looking and divorced from the realities of change in the rest of society, or indeed around the globe.

To give just one example, I can point to the post office. Ten or 15 years ago the post office was highly inefficient and had developed a lax culture about service. It was also resistant to technological change. Taxpayers had to cough up hundreds of millions of dollars a year in unnecessary costs, and it indirectly hampered the competitiveness of Canadian companies. After much turmoil and noise about change, the post office underwent a significant overhaul. Today it is much more efficient and

reliable, and the unnecessary waste of taxpayers' money has been dramatically reduced.

As was the case with the post office back then and with municipal governance now, the time for change is long overdue. Now is the time to prepare greater Toronto for the next century, to prepare for the challenges and opportunities inherent in the globalized economy of the 21st century.

It has been about 30 years since major restructuring around Metropolitan Toronto. The time has arrived for the amalgamation of the existing cities into one unified Toronto. In fact, it is overdue. We cannot afford, as taxpayers, to continue to fund institutions that are not delivering services in the most efficient manner possible.

That was true of the post office in the past and of local government today. The overlap, duplication and confusion inherent in our current governance model has to be eliminated. A new, more streamlined system must be developed for the citizens of Toronto and the surrounding region.

#### 1610

A unified Toronto saves taxpayers money and makes local government more efficient. The idea that we have seven planning departments, also seven roads departments, seven parks departments and numerous fire departments is an old idea, the old way of doing things that no longer is affordable in today's world.

I think this government's actions on amalgamation are very necessary. To continue to enjoy all the benefits that Toronto has to offer, we must be vigilant in preparing for the future. The assumption that the status quo can continue is naïve. Faced with global competition and limited resources, we must be smarter and find ways to be more efficient.

At the municipal level today, we have many different voices speaking for us, voices often contradictory, with too many political differences, protecting their own turf rather than working together. The need for provincial government action, Bill 103 and this committee was demonstrated in spades last year by the actions of our own elected mayors. After years and years of not taking action, not implementing cost-saving measures, not streamlining services and not cooperating together, they all of a sudden managed to cobble together a reform plan. They called their plan Change for the Better. I don't recall the public hearings they held before announcing their plan or really any consultation.

But what a reluctant group of reformers they were. Only under the gun did they start to take action. I am sure some of their ideas were very good and, as already stated, long overdue. But what took them so long? Why didn't they implement many of those good ideas earlier?

The mayors also included a bunch of ideas which underscored the need for a unified Toronto. Left to their own devices, the mayors proposed such convoluted ideas as having Etobicoke be responsible for managing parks in Scarborough and North York taking care of roads in Toronto, or vice versa. Anyway, I can't remember. It's already confusing enough to figure out who to call about local services. Thank God these mayors are not responsible for delivering the mail.

It should be stated that the mayors were not completely at fault for their convoluted approach. I think it reflects a problem with the culture that developed in our municipal governments over the past 30 years, the inward-looking perspective that takes decades to develop and is very hard to change. The only way to modernize municipal governance and prepare Toronto for the 21st century will be to shake things up, to re-engineer our institutions and create this unified government to serve taxpayers better.

Let me turn to the question of neighbourhood survival.

There seems to be a lot of hype and fearmongering that neighbourhoods will disappear under the amalgamation plan. If this were true, it is a serious concern about Bill 103. We have to look to you, the members of this committee, to consider this allegation and, after your study, to pronounce on it.

All I can tell you is that I went to school in the Forest Hill area and lived nearby in the city of York. My experience tells me that neighbourhoods and that sense of community do survive amalgamation. Forest Hill is certainly still a neighbourhood, or a village really, that has retained its sense of community, even though it was amalgamated into the city of Toronto a long time ago.

Let me add another reason why it's imperative to run our governments more efficiently and spend taxpayers' money more wisely. It relates to demographics and to the ideas contained in the book by David Foot called *Boom, Bust and Echo*. We are all familiar with the concept of generation X, that group of young citizens that have followed the front end of the baby boom generation.

Over the past 20 years or so, governments have engaged in serious deficit spending. They have spent more on services than were paid for by taxpayers of the day. In a way, the early boomers got free services, services that are now being paid for by generation X, which followed, all of that due to the spend-now, pay-later deficit financing attitude. But today, with balanced budgets and fiscal responsibility on the part of our governments, which I applaud, generation X will be paying the full cost for these services, in some cases even direct user fees, where in the past there were none.

How is this relevant to amalgamation? The answer is quite simple. This demographic group cannot afford the double whammy of paying more than necessary for government and its services. Generation X is already paying back the principal and interest borrowed by those who came before them. We must now be vigilant not to add to that burden with the unnecessary costs of overlap, duplication and waste. That is true for all levels of government, including municipal.

In closing, I encourage the members of this committee to review the legislation very carefully, but bring about a unified Toronto quickly. We cannot wait another generation for this kind of change.

I thank for your attention and your time.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Steiner. Mr Gilchrist, you have less than three minutes.

**Mr Gilchrist:** I appreciate your coming before us this afternoon and making your presentation. It's unfortunate the way the speaking rotation works that we don't get a chance to comment on every presenter. I'll just take a

couple of seconds to note for the record to Ms Pepperell, who presented two presentations before you, that this bill is very much intended to be a skeleton on which the work of the transition committee and the future council will build.

To the previous presenter, indeed Ms Golden responded "no" when asked if the government had acted to follow up on her report and then proceeded to go on and say that as long as there was a Greater Toronto Services Board, the answer was yes. So I think it's important not to take things out of context. Let me go back to some of the things you said in your presentation here today.

The issue of community survival, of neighbourhood survival: Obviously in the 30 years since the last time Metro underwent any kind of political change there has continued to be a dramatic evolution in the practical side of Metro Toronto. What was once a very developed urban downtown core, and basically farm land in most parts of the surrounding communities, has now clearly changed to what would be considered an almost homogenous and totally urban community from one end to the other.

What about artificial boundaries has in any way preserved the nature of neighbourhoods such as Forest Hill or, I'd even go one step further, communities that never had governments, such as Don Mills, Guildwood in my riding, artificially created in the sense that a developer created them from scratch? What about artificial political boundaries has anything to do with how communities survive?

**Mr Steiner:** I can only speak on my experience from where I've lived, the Cedarvale area of the city of York, and I went to school, as I said, in the Forest Hill area. I don't think the municipal boundaries necessarily contribute or detract from what is a sense of community. Really it's the people and the history of the development of those areas and the informal institutions that have developed around schools and other services that are available in those communities. The local newspapers, the things we used to get at our doorstep, the Town Criers etc, which I'm sure are probably owned by one large corporation but are nicely delivered in those communities, reflect the reality of how people have been interacting over time in those places. As I've said, in the case of Forest Hill, when the boundaries and the political geography changed, the community certainly didn't, and it has maintained that kind of community sense over time.

**The Chair:** You have 10 seconds.

**Mr Steiner:** Speaking of time, I think the Chairman is cutting us off.

**Mr Gilchrist:** In 10 seconds we can't do anything except thank you again for coming forward, Mr Steiner.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Steiner, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION

**The Chair:** Would David Rapaport please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Rapaport, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr David Rapaport:** Good afternoon and thank you for this opportunity for me to make this presentation to your committee today. My name is David Rapaport. I'm

the vice-president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union for the Toronto region. We represent about 30,000 members who work in Metropolitan Toronto and about 20,000 who live here. OPSEU is opposed to Bill 103 and all the downloading initiatives proposed by this government. I will limit my remarks to Bill 103.

I was glad to read this morning that Mr Leach has removed some of the extraordinary powers of the trustees. I would assume that was in anticipation of my presentation here today. The notion of trusteeship of democratically elected governments is itself undemocratic. However, removing some of its more undemocratic elements does not suffice. I would ask that you retract the entire legislation and then apologize to the people of Toronto.

I read with interest a remark by Solicitor General Bob Runciman earlier in the week commenting on the proposed closure of Brockville Psychiatric Hospital: "What really disturbs me is the fact that there has been literally no consultation with the community. There was simply no opportunity for local input." That's from an article in the Toronto Star. I can only hope that Mr Runciman will be consistent when voting on Bill 103. What consultation that has occurred has been overwhelmingly opposed to the legislation. The major task forces and studies done on the issue of governance in Toronto never suggested such a thing. In fact, Ms Trimmer and Ms Golden have both strongly spoken out against Bill 103.

The government argues in defence of Bill 103 that it will save money and result in efficiencies. There is no evidence that this will happen; in fact, there is some evidence that it might very well result in a diseconomy of scale. The government argues in defence of Bill 103 that it will eliminate an unnecessary level of government. How odd, since the very people who are affected by the governance of Toronto, the people of Toronto, were never consulted by the government before the government tabled the legislation. What is going on now hardly cuts the mustard.

## 1620

It takes an enormous amount of arrogance to proceed with this legislation. I'm being told by the government that it doesn't matter what we say, it will proceed anyway. They also have the temerity to tell us that they will disregard the results of the referenda scheduled to finish next week.

The government is talking out of both sides of its mouth. My understanding of conservative principles is a belief that the best government is the type that is closest to the people; not a bad concept. Yet we in Toronto will be left with a government that has one representative for about 40,000 people, a severe reduction from what we have now. That will leave us in Toronto with an inaccessible local government.

Where does the government get off dictating to us the structure of our local governance? It was never discussed in the election. Until we indicate otherwise, the people of Toronto are happy with the structure of governance, particularly the existence of the six separate municipalities. Also, you are supposed to believe in referenda. You even said so. Why the contempt for our referenda?

We would have more respect for the government if it was to tell us why it was really doing this. It has nothing to do with cost savings. It has nothing to do with efficiencies. It has nothing to do with bureaucracies. If anything, the megacity is the creation of a huge, inaccessible mega-bureaucracy. Along with Bill 104 and downloading initiatives, it has everything to do with destroying local government and local political processes and destroying access to the real decision-making. It has everything to do with creating a governance that eliminates the participation of citizens. It will be distant and removed. It will be much more expensive to run for office. It opens up the floodgate for greater corporate control of local government.

The political philosophy of this government seems to be to destroy politics, to present politics as something too expensive and burdensome for the business of the province to occur. It is about privatization and corporate boardroom control of decision-making at either a board of education or a local government.

It saddens me when I walk by the city hall building on Queen Street. I attended committee meetings there with neighbours and colleagues in my union. I always had direct access to councillors who represent me. Government is more than that building; it is about political accessibility.

Retract Bill 103. It is wrong. At a minimum, we would ask you to accept the results of the referenda that are scheduled to be completed next Monday. Not to do so would simply be nothing better than a school-yard bully forcing his ways on the less powerful. This would be a substantial abuse of a parliamentary majority that makes our parliaments look undemocratic. The level of cynicism is overwhelming. Let the people of the city of Toronto speak our minds on our governance.

In conclusion, I want to say that I find it quite astounding that I must utter these words to you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Rapaport. We have a little less than three minutes.

**Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** Thank you for your presentation. I found it very clear, lucid and to the point. You made a reference to no evidence of any amalgamations that you're aware of that showed it would be more efficient or less costly. Can you cite any examples of that?

**Mr Rapaport:** If you look at the one study that I'm familiar with that was done, the Peat Marwick study about the amalgamation of Toronto, even there you find there's no real evidence that money savings will happen. You're in a situation where it might or it might not. I hear of studies of Halifax, where it did cost money, for example.

**Mr Patten:** A lot of money.

**Mr Rapaport:** A lot of money, much more than anticipated. When I talk about diseconomy of scale, it does reach a certain point where it starts costing more money when you amalgamate people at a local level to be governed. What we can say here is that there's really no evidence either way. What I'm trying to get at with my presentation is that there are other motivations at work here.

**Mr Patten:** I agree with you there. I have a couple of other examples. As a matter of fact, as you suggested,

you could probably make the case the other way. If you look at some of the major North American cities, the movement is actually the other way. There are some boroughs in outer New York, for example, that are talking about splitting off because they found it so damn expensive, so removed from the representation they have, that they want to get out of that arrangement. The Halifax situation, which was supposed to cost about \$10 million, is now costing \$25 million more just in the transition. So I don't believe that's really the motivation.

I also find it strange that the Progressive Conservative Party is one of the few groups that denigrates its own profession. I find that, of course, there is a cynicism about politicians today. I don't share that all politicians are evil and that they are simply out for their own self-interest. I believe most of them are motivated for social good. To continue to perpetuate that kind of an image, which of course this bill contributes towards, is not in the interests of building a sense of confidence in the political structures.

In terms of the referenda, the government is saying they are not credible. What is your response to that?

**Mr Rapaport:** It's not as if we had that much time to organize the referenda. It's the best that the cities and the people of Toronto were capable of doing in such an incredibly short period of time. The people in the cities who organized the referenda should be applauded for the amount of work and the energy they put into it, because of the short time frame this government gave. It's totally undemocratic, and we're trying to inject some democracy into the process. They should be applauded, and the referenda should be respected and then proceed with some kind of a public discussion where people could have some input in this very important matter.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Rapaport, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### PATRICIA WATSON

**The Chair:** Patricia Watson, please. Good afternoon. You have 10 minutes today to make your presentation. If there is some time left at the end, I'll ask Mr Silipo from the NDP caucus to ask questions.

**Ms Patricia Watson:** My name is Pat Watson. I'm fifth generation Ontarian. My mother's great-grandfather settled near Richmond Hill. Both my parents were born in Toronto. I have been here all my life, except for a few years in Europe and 10 years in Montreal making films at the National Film Board.

Growing up, I certainly never expected Toronto to become the envy of North America, to be considered one of the best cities in the world in which to live. The Toronto of my youth was considered a boring place, butt of the old joke: "First prize, one week in Toronto; second prize, two weeks in Toronto." It was also a much smaller place. The population in 1951 was less than half of what it is today. To witness other cultures, see how other people lived, one travelled. We don't have to do that any more, nor do we need to travel to experience first-rate theatre, music, dance etc. It's all here.

Now the fear is that we're going to lose it, that Toronto is going to become just another big American-

style city with the attendant crime and inner-city decay, the fabric of our city life destroyed.

When I applied to speak before this committee in mid-January, most of the city was still in a state of shock, numb from the changes announced during mega-week. Six weeks later, what can I say to you that you haven't heard over and over again from American consultants who, based on their megacity experience, warn us about increased costs and crime; from American immigrants like Jane Jacobs, who fear Toronto will become a clone of the cities they left behind; from the Golden task force, the board of trade, the banks; from your own supporters, who, feeling betrayed and bewildered, have flocked to meetings you called to angrily denounce the bill and in some cases call on their Tory MPPs to resign?

This surprised me. I wasn't surprised by similar behaviour at my neighbourhood meeting. Cabbagetown, after all, spawned John Sewell and Karl Jaffary. I was in the audience that booed and laughed impatiently through much of Mr Newman's presentation. I see Mr Newman, Tory MPP, is not here today. I thought at the time he must have felt very lonely.

1630

People have turned out by the thousands to march down Yonge Street, demonstrate in front of the Legislature, a cross-section of the city's population: professional middle class, union members, the working poor, women and children who will suffer most from the welfare changes.

Peter Russell, one of our foremost experts on constitutional law, has called this bill a "bludgeoning, undemocratic act." Margaret Atwood called it a "dismantling of democracy." It has been proposed that the federal government disallow it. An appeal was made to the Lieutenant Governor to dissolve this government for its undemocratic, unparliamentary ways.

Recently, the city of Scarborough, with Karl Jaffary, I understand, successfully challenged the legality of the trusteeship until the bill is passed. Further challenges are planned. Even members of the federal government have spoken out against it, fearing that the wellbeing of Toronto, which represents 25% of the gross national product, will be undermined, that plans to download social services and public housing — a shared jurisdiction on which the provincial government has spoken unilaterally — will create fiscal havoc. Ordinary people everywhere are talking about it, appealing to you to slow down. What's the rush?

Some of your own Tory MPPs, listening to their constituents, have broken ranks and spoken out against the bill, as have the aboriginal people, publicly burning a copy of the Common Sense Revolution. Mothers of school children, pushed to extremes, are threatening to take to the streets to bring down this government. This, a Tory government, traditionally a party of good, solid administration, slow change, preserving what is good, now accused of hasty, dishonest, inefficient administration.

Never in all my years in Toronto have I witnessed anything like it. How did this come about? I should know, of course. I should have been paying attention, but I confess I'm apolitical by nature and until mega-week

assumed that in Ontario I could safely leave such matters to others. Never again.

I've tried to piece things together. The Golden report, commissioned by the Rae government, recommended a model that by and large would satisfy the citizens of Toronto today, that would maintain our local governments and create a Greater Toronto Services Board drawn from local governments to deal with common regional issues. But Golden's long-term, admirable effort was largely ignored. Mr Harris claims he has implemented 90% of it, which Golden has categorically and explicitly denied. In any case, we know he has not implemented her proposals for public consultation, a two-tier government and the strengthening of local democracy.

According to the Toronto Star, keen supporters of the megacity, nobody much liked the Golden report when it was released and the Harris government got sick and tired of listening to the mayors of Toronto bicker among themselves. Surely that's the nature of the democratic process, and politicians in particular. A megacity wouldn't change that.

Mr Bech-Hensen, a member of the board of trade who spoke to our Cabbagetown meeting, called the present agreement among mayors a form of deathbed repentance. Perhaps he's right. Perhaps it took the megacity scare to overcome their differences, to bring about their willingness to compromise and cooperate. What's wrong with that?

I telephoned Mr Bech-Hensen. He told me the board of trade had supported the Golden report and would do so again. They were for either keeping local government with the Greater Toronto Services Board or the megacity without the downloading.

The famous downloading: According to its enemies, the megacity is simply a smokescreen behind which social services and Ontario public housing might be downloaded. Others argue the plan is Mike Harris's way of striking out against what Mr Newman called the "inner-city lefties," which, it seems, includes me and my Liberal MP, Bill Graham.

"Will the plan hold?" I ask myself. With the opposition of the federal government, the board of trade, the banks, United Way and Crombie and with the revelation that \$1 billion is needed to bring Ontario housing up to standard, the downloading seems doomed, or should be.

East York and its auditors have punctured claims that the megacity would save money. Recent polls suggest 68% of Toronto residents are against it. So what will happen if the referendums do in fact go against the megacity?

John Barber in the *Globe and Mail* quoted from the government Website as follows: "We believe that individuals should decide their own future. In turn, the function of government should be to serve and facilitate those aspirations, not to rule or constrain them. Referenda are but one way of putting taxpayers back in control of their government."

Others in these hearings have already quoted Mr Harris as saying, before he was elected, that he was opposed to amalgamation, that it would cost more, that bigger is not cheaper, that we should hold on to our identity, our roots. The cornerstone of his political position then was anti-big

government, anti-megacity. It seems Mike Harris got it right the first time.

We all want change, efficiency, to streamline, to get rid of unnecessary duplication, but we also want to be part of the process. It's a deeply felt, growing need, some say the flipside of globalization. If this government continues to ignore it, you will follow the Peterson Liberals, the Bob Rae NDP, and the Mulroney Conservatives into oblivion. It's something to think about.

**Mr Silipo:** One of the things that has become clear to me, and you've made this point in your presentation, is that it's not just the inner-city lefties, to use Mr Newman's term, who are upset about this — not that there's anything wrong with inner-city lefties, by the way. What we have seen on this issue is really an incredible grass-roots citizens movement that's sprung up and has come about, clearly in part because of the process and obviously also because of what the government is doing.

I wonder if you could comment a little about what that means — you touched upon it in your final comments — to a government that really is intent, it seems, in continuing to ignore that that is what is going on. This is not a political faction, it's not a small group of self-interested folks; it's a real grass-roots movement that's right across Metropolitan Toronto.

**Ms Watson:** It's a political phenomenon. Certainly for me, if I had had any doubt about whether it was worthwhile holding on to this community, watching what has happened and the commitment and the passion and the caring of people involved would have persuaded me. As I say, people do speculate that it is the flipside of globalization, which this government is rightly concerned about, but I don't think you can just latch on to one aspect of it and ignore others.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Watson, for coming forward and making your presentation to us this afternoon.

#### ROY MITCHELL

**The Chair:** Would Roy Mitchell please come forward. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes to make your presentation.

**Mr Roy Mitchell:** I brought my suitcase because it's all packed and I don't think I can live in a megacity. It's not unusual for me to think about moving.

What I want people to think about when you read this piece of paper in front of you — this is from a biweekly gay and lesbian/bisexual newspaper that comes out in Toronto called Extra. My friend Arif Noorani and I wrote this paper looking at the megacity and its effect on gays, lesbians, bisexuals and people of difference who live in the downtown core. I was going to wear a suit today but I just couldn't face it. I thought, "If I'm going to go with this point that it's a diverse city, I'm going to wear something different." So this is my suit.

Like most gays and lesbians, most of my friends didn't grow up in Toronto. We came to Toronto because we saw Toronto as a place where we could develop our communities and where we could find support for our communities. This government now has shown little support for a lot of what our community has fought for. The government cancelled the funding for the lesbian and gay/bi youth line. Metro government just wouldn't

support it. The only support we got for this lesbian and gay/bi youth line was from the city of Toronto, a downtown, focused group of people who can understand urban issues.

Urban issues are what this is all about, and I don't think the government now can understand what urban issues are all about. I know the government doesn't like big government, but they're certainly using big government to make little government. Using big government to make little government is probably because — I don't think they're that concerned about being in government, at least some of the big top ones, because they're feathering their nests so when this is finished and they go back to their jobs, if they'll have them, they'll be quite comfortable.

But unfortunately for most of us who live in downtown Toronto and see amalgamation as a threat to our communities, this is not true. Downtown Toronto sustains us. I'm talking about amalgamation, but I see all this downloading and AVA and the school board bill, Bill 104, as creating a very hostile environment for gays and lesbians in downtown Toronto.

#### 1640

Toronto is a city of difference. It's a diverse city. Sometimes disagreeable communities are forced to live side by side and accept each other, but not necessarily agree with each other. John Sewell said that Toronto fosters a live and let live attitude.

Integration in Toronto is a fact of life, but not so in other communities. I speak from the experience of having to get out of northern Ontario and my friend having to get out of Port Coquitlam because there was a community here that could support us and we could develop our skills as whatever we wanted to be and find support.

In Toronto the gay and lesbian community has a lot of influence in local politics and is involved in local politics. If you have something on your mind, you can do something about it. A local council is supportive to our needs and understands our needs. This whole group of this megacity would probably represent what Metro is right now, and Metro doesn't — how would I say this? Metro will be a voice of the suburbs, and that doesn't look very good for us.

When Metro was going to agree to funding, whatever they had to vote for, two groups were isolated: Buddies in Bad Times Theatre Company and the Inside Out Video Collective. These people were not allowed funding and they had to fight Metro to get that funding, something like \$8,000 and \$2,000. That was a fight. I don't know if politicians are going to be able to fight for \$8,000 or \$2,000 on a mega-council. Is it worth it when they're fighting for day care, when they're fighting for all these other things that are going to see loss in services?

Amalgamating the school boards — I know that's Bill 104, but I'm concerned about that. I'm concerned about the headway that the board of education in downtown Toronto has made in anti-homophobia work and human sexuality workshops. I don't know if that will happen in a megacity. Concerns of lesbian and gay students will fall off the table.

One thing that's of concern to me is the people living with HIV and AIDS. The board of health will be amalga-

mated and we don't know what will happen with that kind of funding.

The problem with this megacity is that it's going by so fast and so furious that we haven't been informed about what we see in our communities will be challenged and changed. We don't know. We're sitting around listening to rumours, we're sitting around listening to hearsay. We know it's going to change and we'd like to know how, and we'd like to play a part in making those changes.

When you go straight ahead into this megacity thing, I suggest that you slow down and let the people who are involved help make these changes. If there are changes to be made that have to be made, we'll make them as a community, as a city that is going to be changed.

Gay and lesbian life is seen as controversial. It's an urban issue, and I'm concerned that this government doesn't have an idea around urban issues. Information around AIDS, around sexuality that is written for an urban community, that is written for a gay and lesbian community, will not pass, will not get a lot of support in a suburban-dominated council.

Inner cities and what they represent — large numbers of people of colour, lesbians and gay men, the working poor artist — have become common scapegoats for what's wrong with cities. You see all these things about urban life represented on TV cop shows, you see cuts to arts funding, you see family-values politicking. Gays and lesbians are seen as threats to family values in a lot of ways, so what you're going to have is a lot of people leaving downtown Toronto to live in suburbia where it's safe, because the downtown, with amalgamation, will probably see a lot of failure.

The big rumour is that the downtown services will be set at the lowest common denominator. I'm going to fight to make sure that doesn't happen. I was just joking: I'm not going to leave Toronto and I'm going to try and spend a lot of time trying to change and challenge this bill and all the other Tory bills that are happening, with a lot of grass-roots support. That's it.

*Applause.*

**The Chair:** Order, please. Two minutes.

**Mrs Julia Munro (Durham-York):** Thank you very much. I want to ask —

**Mr Mitchell:** Are you Progressive Conservative?

**Mrs Munro:** Yes.

**Mr Patten:** They all are, on that side.

**Mr Mitchell:** I know. I just wanted her to say that.

**Mrs Munro:** I want to ask you two questions. One is with regard to this whole issue of neighbourhoods. We've heard from so many people who have really eloquently talked about the vibrancy of the neighbourhoods in Toronto. We have an almost 200-year history of Toronto being a community of neighbourhoods, and every time there's a reconfiguration of political boundaries, these neighbourhoods survive that political configuration. In fact, it seems as if it doesn't have a direct bearing on them.

**Mr Mitchell:** I think it does. If you look at AVA and start to raise taxes for homes, for property, people who pay rent will not be able to afford to live in a city where the rent is high. Whole neighbourhoods will change. If I can't afford to live in my apartment or I can't afford to

pay my property taxes, I will leave. In Toronto you have working poor living beside rich, you have communities living all over the place, and there's a difference in income. When you introduce AVA, who can afford to live in these things? In Detroit, in cities in the States, there is no Rosedale in the centre of the city. The people like those in Rosedale, the rich, do not live in the downtown core. They live in — I don't know the names of those suburbs, but that's where they live.

When you amalgamate, the property tax is what's going to be affected. When the property tax has risen, the people who pay rent and the people who pay property taxes will have to decide whether they're going to live in that city or move to where it's cheap. I think that will change neighbourhoods.

**The Chair:** We've effectively exhausted the allotted time. I want to thank you very much, Mr Mitchell, for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this afternoon.

#### BERNARD MARTIN

**The Chair:** Would Bernard Martin please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Martin. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Bernard Martin:** Good afternoon. I'd like to thank the members of the committee for agreeing to hear me and other citizens on this important issue.

My name is Bernard Martin. I am a PhD candidate in English at York University, where I am also employed as a teaching assistant. I was born and raised in the suburbs of Montreal, and since moving from Montreal I have lived in the city of Toronto for almost seven years. When I first moved to Toronto my friends in Montreal warned me that it was impossible to get a good bagel and that the hockey team here was no good. Those things might be true, but none the less I've come to love Toronto. It's a wonderful city. It's a place where I can call up my city councillor and receive a reply from him or a staffer within 24 hours, every single time, whatever the issue was, even if because he was foisting it off to some other department; I've always gotten a reply. This is something I have never gotten — I've never had Isabel Bassett, my MLA, return even a single phone call or fax.

I'd like to be able to preserve the good things about governance in Toronto. For this reason, I am opposed to Bill 103. The government has not demonstrated that amalgamation will produce any of its promised tax savings, and the examples of many other cities demonstrate that higher expenses, poorer services and reduced democracy will result from the new government.

The current megacity bill and the related mega-week legislation on social spending downloading and education uploading ignore the recommendations of most of the recent studies on municipal reform.

#### 1650

But I have not come here today to take the government to task for the failings of the megacity bill. Many other speakers before this committee have done that well and explained in great detail the reasons the current amalgamation plan is a bad idea. Instead, I would like to make suggestions to the government of ways to amend Bill 103 or, I hope, to replace it with new legislation. While I'm

sure the members of the committee will have heard by now many reasoned and constructive suggestions from citizens, I'd like to list my own suggestions for revisions to any future legislation on the megacity.

The next few weeks will be an opportune time for reflection on this committee's proceedings. On Monday the votes will be tallied in the ongoing municipal referendums on the megacity. Whatever the outcome of these acts of local democracy, the upcoming post-referendum period will be a good time for both sides of the debate to sit down, take a deep breath, and consider how best to proceed in a way that will keep Metropolitan Toronto a successful and thriving city.

(1) The provincial government must prevent itself from appropriating the reserve funds of the cities of Metro. Surely the provincial government is not contemplating a near-billion-dollar tax grab on these reserve funds built up over the years by the hardworking taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto. Appropriation of these funds for any purpose other than direct municipal expenditures would be a slap in the face to the citizens of all Ontario towns and cities, towns and cities which have worked hard, especially in recent times, to maintain services under increasing financial pressure while successfully avoiding the deficit spending allowed to our governments in Ottawa and Queen's Park.

Reserve funds are the result of prudent savings for the inevitable rainy days which befall all communities through economic cycles. Is there not a clause preventing such appropriation in the law amalgamating the towns of the Kingston area? The citizens of Metro Toronto deserve no less consideration. Surely the omission of such a clause in Bill 103 is an unintentional oversight. Surely the current government would not finance the contemplated layoffs of police, firefighters, and other municipal employees by using municipal reserve funds for severance packages, much less appropriate the reserve funds to offset its own promised provincial tax cut.

I urge the government to show its good faith and reassure the ratepayers of Metro by legislating a hands-off policy on municipal reserves in any future legislation.

(2) The timing of amalgamation should be stepped back or stopped until the parties involved can agree upon a schedule which will minimize expense and disruption. The current speed of the legislative process and the end-of-the-year amalgamation date suggest that smooth transition is being sacrificed in the name of expediting change.

For example, it may be true that amalgamating the current six fire departments of Metro into one will produce economies and coordinated services, as with the Metro police. I don't think so, but it might be true. But the bottom line must never be the driving force behind the amalgamation of services which, like firefighting, are necessary for public safety. It will be a false economy if the organizational disruption of amalgamation causes the loss of even one life or of even one house.

Let us instead make plans on how to amalgamate rather than construct a strict timetable. Justice Brennan's recent decision about the invalidity of the three trustees' actions until Bill 103 becomes law suggests strongly that the amalgamation process has already been proceeding

too quickly and that the current legislation could benefit from some sober reflection. Contrary to what some members of the government have said, the time for studies is not past. Amendments on the shift in the schedule of amalgamation should therefore include provisions for the trustees' work to begin at a date only after the bill has been passed into law.

Moreover, let us take a lesson from past success: When the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto was first formed, the transition team, elected by individual city councils, was put in place in 1953 and worked for the better part of a year to coordinate the functions of the fledgling Metro government before actually taking on day-to-day financial responsibilities in 1954. Today the population of Metro is larger, its relations with surrounding communities are more complex, and the financial stakes are correspondingly greater. Let us have a transition team in place for a year prior to taking official responsibility for the new city.

(3) Any transition team must be elected democratically, either by selection by individual city councillors, as councillors to the Metro level of government used to be elected, or by direct vote by the people. There should be reserved spots on the transition team for the current mayors and some councillors of the current cities, for the chair of Metro Toronto and some Metro councillors, as well as others currently without public office. This composition will recognize the democratic trust placed in the current elected officials, a trust ignored by the current legislation's faceless transition team.

The transition team's immunity from judicial review or any legal action puts it, or seems to put it, above the law. Citizen confidence in its new government will be rewarded if legislation allows full accountability of the transition team to voters and coordination between existing municipal governments. As well, the trustees must be accountable to the citizens of Ontario and to elected officials and must be allowed to speak publicly about their actions to individuals and to the media.

(4) Neighbourhood committees, as described in Bill 103, must have binding powers. Under the present legislation the transition team will decide in an irrevocable fashion the range and limits of committee powers. Neighbourhood committees without binding powers may be led by the best folks in the world and yet won't provide the democracy that many of us are clamouring to save. Democracy can only exist in the voices of neighbourhoods if neighbourhood committees make decisions which have the force of law, rather than suggestions which can be ignored or favoured by the whims of the newer, smaller, and more remote megacity council. And, since law must have the power of taxation behind it, any changes to the amalgamation legislation must give neighbourhood committees specific and real spending powers.

(5) Coordinate changes to taxation to preserve neighbourhoods. It is true that a fairer property tax system is necessary. It is unfair that a homeowner in Scarborough pays more tax on a house with the same market valuation than one in the Annex. But the proposed actual value assessment will make many homeowners victim to inflationary high taxes due to real estate speculation. If

the properties surrounding a home are purchased for commercial development, under actual value assessment that home will increase in market value and the homeowner's taxes will increase dramatically. If the homeowner stays, he or she will be punished by higher taxes. No community should be subject to the transience of population caused by the exodus of people made suddenly poor through a tax hike.

Current government provisions to regulate the property tax load of low-income seniors flies in the face of the government's aim to simplify the tax system and disentangle government from the lives of citizens. Let us create a good property tax system that will be fair to all but will protect homeowners from the predations of real estate speculation and developer greed, guarantee slowed change to neighbourhoods, and enable low-income families to keep their homes.

In conclusion, let me recall the words of Minister Al Leach at a recent public meeting, where he dared anyone to say he didn't love Toronto. I don't doubt Minister Leach, but I ask him to demonstrate his love through his actions, by amending or creating new legislation to prevent a tax grab, and to slow or stop the amalgamation process until after the promised efficient and democratic organizations are in place.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr Martin. You've exhausted your allotted time, but I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for your presentation today.

#### BRENT PATTERSON

**The Chair:** Would Brent Patterson please come forward. Good afternoon, Mr Patterson. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Brent Patterson:** Great, thank you very much. My name is Brent Patterson. I've lived in Toronto for approximately 10 years. I'm originally from Saskatchewan. I'm a parent of a 10-month-old child, a resident of the Riverdale area, a lay worker for the Church of the Holy Trinity, and active in the Metro Network for Social Justice.

Many people have made articulate expressions of opposition to Bill 103. We've heard these concerns here at this legislative committee, at a massive number of public forums right across Metro, in letters to the editor in various newspapers, and in our own neighbourhoods and families.

I don't think I need to go over the points that others have made so wonderfully, other than to say I oppose Bill 103 primarily because of three reasons.

(1) Our local politicians would be less accessible. For North Bay, Mike Harris seems content with 10 city councillors for a population of 55,000 people. That's one elected official for every 5,500 people. Why then is he proposing for Metro Toronto a ratio of one elected official for every 50,000 residents?

(2) By eliminating levels of government and reducing the number of democratically elected representatives of the people, we would lose the necessary and historical counterbalance against the corporate interests that want to reduce us from citizens to mere consumers and producers.

(3) With the massive downloading being proposed to finance the government's ill-conceived tax cut scheme, residents of Metro will either find their property taxes, which are already a regressive form of taxation, skyrocketing or they will see a massive deterioration of essential services that we all rely on, such as child care, homes for the aged, public transportation, public transit, libraries, and the list goes on.

#### 1700

It is clear that the people of Metropolitan Toronto oppose Bill 103. The Environics poll recently released finds that nearly 70% of Metro residents are opposed to amalgamation.

We have every reason to expect that the No side will win the referenda being conducted by the different municipalities. Even Al Leach, the Tory Minister of Municipal Affairs, was quoted in today's Toronto Star as saying that he expects a No victory in the referenda. Yet the Harris government has shown no willingness to abide by the democratic expression of the people and shelve Bill 103.

I would like to offer you three arguments to think about what you, meaning the Tory government members, are doing. They're really questions:

(1) Where is your mandate to proceed with amalgamation? I looked through the Common Sense Revolution document this morning and nowhere in that paper could I find a reference to amalgamating the six municipalities of Metropolitan Toronto.

(2) Where is your popular support for Bill 103? As I said, it's clear that the majority of people oppose it. Given the polls that have recently been released and given our expected victory on Monday, I can only ask: For which minority are you therefore pursuing this bill?

(3) If you believe Bill 103 is so essential, why don't you call an election right now and run on it as your central plank? Or perhaps we'll try and be more fair: Why don't you shelve Bill 103 for now and run on it in the next election, which will come within two years? I think you'll get a fairly clear expression of the people at that point in terms of your lack of re-election.

My central concern is that this government is unwilling to abide by the democratic expression of the people of Metro. Setting aside any critique of Bill 103, if the people say no to it, as they are doing, you are under an obligation to scrap your plans, and I do mean scrap Bill 103 — not make a few minor technical amendments, but scrap it. If you do not listen to the democratic expression of the people, you take a huge step towards forfeiting your legitimacy as a government. It is my belief that if you forfeit your legitimacy you will be inviting a massive non-violent — and I underline "non-violent" — civil obedience campaign. You will be inviting sit-ins, road blockages and occupations of ministerial offices by people who demand that you be obedient to the wishes of the citizenry.

Back in October I was involved in a plant-in under Mike Harris's office window. We planted a garden to draw attention to the issue of the hungry in this province. We were arrested at that time and charged with mischief and damage over \$5,000. We recently went to court and, if you've read the Globe and Mail article on that, you'll

find that we were found not guilty. The judge ruled that political dissent should be encouraged here at Queen's Park rather than quashed by the Criminal Code. Nominally, one could define that as civil disobedience, but after the referenda I think we can look at civil obedience.

I'm appealing to your best sensibilities. Listen to what the people have to say, and don't cavalierly dismiss them. I can't tell you how many times I've seen on television Tory MPPs saying: "Look, I've gone to this meeting. It looked like the same old people, I heard the same old things, and it didn't change my mind." That's not what democracy is about. You're here to serve the people.

Al Leach said on CBC television last night that people are heaping a whole pile of issues into their reasons for opposing Bill 103 and really this is turning out to be a vote against the whole Harris agenda. Well, that's a really strange defence that Leach is using in terms of this, but when he says that I presume he means that people are growing more and more concerned over the elderly man who died unattended on a stretcher in the hallway of a hospital in Sault Ste Marie, or he's talking about people's concerns over homeless people freezing to death on the streets of Toronto, people's concerns over children who go to school hungry, people's concerns over the welfare cutbacks that have resulted in people living in desperate poverty.

If you can't hear your best sensibilities and, if I may say, listen to your heart, listen to Al Leach and know that the tide has turned against Bill 103, against this government's horrific policies and against this government itself. Thank you.

**Mr Curling:** Thank you very much. The points you've made here are excellent. You said you wanted to try to avoid repeating all those people's comments, but it is consistent, consistently saying, "This is a community," and the consistency is the thing this government refuses to listen to.

You made reference quite often to communities and neighbourhoods, in other words, boundaries and lines. But this government, like Mr Gilchrist and the other members, constantly say these invisible lines don't mean anything. Maybe one day we'll be flying the American flag and say there are no lines, or maybe one day Toronto will be a province or whatever it will be.

How concerned are you about the constant comments by the members: "What are you talking about? There are no lines. It means nothing."

**Mr Patterson:** If I may say bluntly, what I enjoy about the area I live in, which is Riverdale — I'm a resident of the Bain Co-op — is that I draw a lot of pleasure from living in a community, being able to share an area with my neighbours, being able to enjoy conversations, common areas, common parks where our children can play, all of that. Those neighbourhoods are really essential in that they absolutely bolster a sense of civility within a large city.

In terms of the kinds of comments that have been coming from Tory MPPs, I sense that they drive here in their big automobiles, spend the day at Queen's Park, and then drive home and, not necessarily live in a gated community, but stay within their house. I would appeal to their best sensibilities to try to get a sense of what

community life is like and to share in that. Perhaps then they'd have some appreciation of how important communities, social network, social support is.

**Mr Curling:** Civil disobedience is quite often mentioned. It's always mentioned about frustration, not getting access to your politicians, government not listening to you. Are you hearing more about civil disobedience? I am. I've been to quite a few meetings and this is what I'm hearing. Do you see a lot more? You mentioned that, that you do really see a lot more civil disobedience coming about if nothing is done.

**Mr Patterson:** I've heard a lot more discussion around it. Again, in this instance I would want to characterize it as civil obedience. After Monday's referenda, when it's clear that the people have democratically, through a ballot box or what not, said no to the megacity, and it seems the government has every intention of proceeding with it, then in terms of citizens mobilizing, it's civil obedience, saying, "Listen to the will of the people." We'll use other non-violent methods to try and get the government's attention.

What I've seen in this is that it's not just your traditional activist group that is talking about this. This runs across a whole spectrum of people who are very angry and very frustrated but, thankfully, looking at non-violent civil disobedience or obedience to reject these government policies.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Patterson, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

#### SHIRLEY ROBURN

**The Chair:** Would Shirley Roburn please come forward. Good afternoon. Welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes today to make a presentation.

**Ms Shirley Roburn:** What do you say to a bunch of people who might think your life isn't worth shit? That might seem a strange way to begin, but that really was the first question I asked myself when I came here, because I wasn't sure that what I have to say would be as equally respected as what some other people would have to say.

I thought back to why I was here, and I guess I want to begin by saying thank you to the long tradition of people who make me believe this process is meaningful. I want to thank the first nations, whose traditional land this is, for being here at all. I want to thank all the people, from Oliver Cromwell on, who have fought to extend our definition of democracy and what that is. I want to thank the suffragettes, who believed that women should be included, and social democratic movements from the churches, who also struggle to make that definition wider. I want to thank the people from Latin America, who in the early 1980s really showed what popular education and popular movements could be about.

Finally, because it's Black History Month, I want to say I looked especially to the civil rights movement and to the people who, at a time when they didn't feel very respected, went and registered voters and voted anyway. I find that a really inspiring example.

Very lastly, I want to thank you all for being here because it's in coming out every day and practising democracy that we make it meaningful.

1710

Coming back to that first question, I had a hard time coming here because I have a hard time balancing showing you respect with the really deep anger I feel about this bill and about where this bill is going. I find it hard to reconcile that and to use a lot of fancy words and a lot of big, long points to make it absolutely clear that for me and for my community and the people I know, you don't have my consent to go ahead with this bill.

If there are two things that I hope you draw from what I have to say here today, it is that I do understand this bill. I understand how it fits into the larger context of bills and the direction this government is going, and you don't have my consent to do it.

As far as I'm concerned, this isn't about money, or the only way it's about money is about giving a 30% tax cut to the richest Ontarians. To make those kinds of deep cuts to social services, cuts like closing every single rape crisis centre in the province, cuts like making welfare so low that the recommended diet for people on welfare from our government is below the UN standard for prisoners of war — for these kinds of cuts, I think it's clear you don't have consent. So the way the government is going about it is by creating confusion, passing a whole bunch of bills together so people don't know what's coming and what's going and how to fight it.

I want to say in the case of this particular bill that I recognize that to make these massive changes the government wants to make in order to unload some of its debt structure, it is going to place my democratically elected government into trusteeship, without my consent, and for one year to have totally unaccountable trustees, and then after one year to put in some new form of government which will be democratically elected.

There's been a lot of talk in the papers about this, about how seriously to take this allusion to Fascism or Yugoslavia or all these things. For me, it's really not a joke. I'm a European citizen and up till last June I was working quite closely with people from the former Yugoslavia. I'm the child of a refugee. For me, when I look at what's being done here, I really have a hard time seeing what the difference is in the spirit of that policy.

For me, it's the spirit of that policy that is really important. One strategy this government has used is to put out a bunch of changes that are unacceptable, revoke maybe the most obviously unacceptable ones and still go ahead with massive things that people don't approve of. I don't want that to happen here. Even if the trusteeship issue is taken out, there's still a really big problem with this bill.

I want to explain my problem with the spirit of this bill by telling a story. The other day I was coming off the streetcar on Queen Street in rush-hour, which I do every day, and I was going down to the subway, down this narrow, little way that maybe has room for two rows of people. As I was going down with a crowd of about 50 people, there was one man coming up the other way and as he started coming up the other way, he started pushing all the people out of his way and he pushed me and

knocked me over to the side. When I looked up ahead of me, everyone in front of me was going down like a bowling pin. Finally he hit one woman who stopped right in front of his tracks and pushed him back and said, "Why are you pushing this tide of people?" He said: "There's only room for two lanes of people here. I have the right of way; you're wrong." He pushed the woman down the stairs and kept going. For me, that is the spirit of your Ontario and that's the spirit of this bill.

I find it really hypocritical that we keep talking about giving more responsibility to the community, about how the community is going to take on a lot of these new responsibilities, and at the same time we're totally eroding the infrastructure and the services that have built these communities over the past years. I think what we're really doing with this bill and bills like it is making the individual so isolated, so economically downtrodden and so stressed out that like all the people going down the stairs, they just don't have the energy left to fight back.

An example with this bill and the shuffling of powers would be day care. If there is less subsidized day care, that's going to go individually on to poor people who will look after more kids at home. Another example that made the *Globe and Mail* yesterday is elderly people. If we have less and less care for the elderly and more of these social services are downloaded, who's going to be looking after old people? Women.

For me it's not abstract at all. Because I don't have a lot of time, I want to give you one really concrete example of how this bill could basically erode community services and kill people. This is a personal example for me because I happen to have a queer sibling. In Toronto schools, in the Toronto school board, because there's been community support over the years in the Metro area which extended to dialogue with the school board, there is one school that is especially for children or young adults who are coming out and who are dealing with these issues. They face human rights violations every day sometimes in their local schools and they need these places. Right now a quarter of attempted teen suicides are queer teenagers.

If this bill goes through and a bunch of other bills like it go through and we shuffle and get rid of services and eliminate this kind of service as special or unnecessary, then more people are going to die and that could be my sister and I think that really sucks.

I think this process that we're going through right now is really unrepresentative. For example, I had to write a letter to get here and about 20% of Canadians are functionally illiterate. Those are probably the people who are using the adult education services that will be eliminated under this shuffling and amalgamation, and I don't see them here. I don't see people using English-as-a-second-language services writing letters or being here. I live on the outskirts of Parkdale and there are a lot of homeless people in my community. I don't see the clerk phoning anybody who doesn't have a fixed address and saying, "Hey, come on down and talk about the bill."

To me what's worse than the fact that this process is unrepresentative and what really scares me is that because of all the pressure I'm under and because of all the pressure everyone around me is under, I see that I myself

am turning more and more into that little old man going up the stairs, into someone who is so ungenerous and avaricious and righteous that all I can think about is how to protect my own and how to get by day to day. I see that if my tuition doubles again, if my rent goes up 15% to 40%, I'm not going to be a very generous person either.

I guess I've told you a lot of things that I understand about this bill and how it fits in with other bills, but I have to say that what I really don't understand sometimes is how this could be. I look around and I see that I live in one of the richest provinces of one of the richest countries in the world and I don't understand why it is that 20% of children are living in poverty or why we are pursuing policies that are putting that on the increase.

I know that 75% of people in Toronto who need psychiatric services don't get any kind of treatment at all, ever, and yet we're amalgamating the very last psychiatric hospitals that are available.

**The Chair:** Ms Roburn, I'm sorry to interrupt but you've come to the end of your allotted time.

**Ms Roburn:** I'm done?

**The Chair:** No, a final wrapup, if you want.

**Ms Roburn:** I'm really concerned about the mean-spiritedness of this bill and this amalgamation. I don't think we've ever done enough to meet the needs of our neighbours and our sisters and our brothers, and I don't think it's time to be pulling the purse-strings tighter.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for coming forward today and making your presentation.

1720

#### KATHY EISNER THEILHEIMER

**The Chair:** Would Kathy Eisner Theilheimer please come forward. Good afternoon. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Kathy Eisner Theilheimer:** Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. Unlike most of the people speaking at these hearings, I'm not a long-time resident of Toronto. I've been living here less than 6 months. My husband and I came, as many Ontarians and Canadians come to Toronto, to work.

I'm from a small rural community in the Ottawa Valley where we love to hate Toronto. We bought a house here, but we are still holding on to our farm and hope to return there some day, so I'd like to speak today for the many Ottawa Valley transplants to Toronto and for my rural neighbours.

Like most Ontarians outside of Toronto, we love to hate it but we know we need it and we know we need it to remain vibrant and livable. We know we need it because it not only feeds our resource-based economy, it is our economy. We need it to remain one of the best cities in the world because its degeneration means our certain economic demise. Most of all, we need it to remain a livable, human city because we send our children here to go to school, to work. So, much as we love to hate Toronto, we have a great deal invested in it remaining a great city and not degenerating into a deteriorating American-style city. We need to know that our children, when they come here, and they will, will have a safe, human city where they can lead productive

lives. That's why I am opposing Bill 103 and the forced amalgamation of this great metropolitan area.

I visited Atlanta a couple of years ago on business. It's a good example of the kind of city we don't want, with huge divisions between the wealthy and the poor, incredibly vast areas of suburbs, a crumbling inner core and extremely high crime rates. On a beautiful spring day when I was there, the urban core was a ghost town.

As I said, I've been living here for less than six months and I'm in awe of this city. We bought a house in the east end. My neighbourhood is clean, safe and friendly, with many recreation opportunities and an active community centre. Many of my neighbours have been there for 30 years or more, but even the newcomers clearly have pride in their community.

As far as dealing with different levels of government is concerned, I had no trouble finding what I needed from either the city or Metro government. The divisions seem clear enough.

The Toronto area municipalities have avoided the blight of many North American cities partly through sound urban planning based on made-in-community solutions for various community needs. Being the best city in the world in which to live didn't just happen. People worked together to make their neighbourhoods livable. They want to continue to work together. To do that they need access to their local government representatives. Don't take that access away.

Coming from a small municipality, I'm used to being on a first-name basis with municipal councillors. They know me, they know where I live, they know where all my relatives live and they know I will be on the phone to them when I have a problem or an opinion on a municipal issue. I don't expect my urban representatives to be so close at hand, but I do expect them to be accessible. So far they are. I've already had an opportunity to meet the councillor for my ward.

As a newcomer to Toronto, I'm impressed with how well the city works. I'd like to tell Mr Leach that it ain't broke. But it will be if the government insists on bringing forward the restructuring changes it plans.

Many speakers have already talked about the damage that will occur in the Metropolitan area if the changes outlined in the Harris mega-week go forward. I'm in full agreement with those speakers. It can only mean higher taxes and cuts in services, the very things that will destroy the urban core and bring about a deteriorating American-style city. We cannot let that happen.

As a person who still has deep roots outside Toronto, I'm also opposed to Bill 103 for another reason. The amalgamation of the municipalities and the downloading of costs of services that are clearly part and parcel of the plan, if not this bill, must be stopped here in Toronto. It must be stopped here before it destroys the rest of the province.

While paying for a greater portion of welfare costs, housing, child care, long-term care and other so-called soft services will be devastating to Toronto, the results will be far worse in small rural communities like mine. We have little enough as it is in terms of services and now they are under threat.

In Toronto, services will be cut back. In our small communities, they will entirely disappear. There is no

way our child care centres and libraries will survive. Unemployment in many of our resource-based communities far exceeds the provincial average. Our welfare rates are high. We have little control over the levers of the economy and yet we are expected to pay when it fails us. We have a higher percentage of older folks, as people who have spent their working years paying taxes in the city move home to the Valley to retire. We have not gained municipally from their taxes and yet we are expected to pay for their care.

People in our rural communities want to care for one another, they want to have things like libraries and child care for their children, and yet if the downloading of costs of services goes ahead these things will disappear. There is no way we can afford them.

Forced amalgamation of townships means greater expenses as municipal governments have to deal with vast geographic areas, areas that have very different needs and differing populations. How will we decide which things go first in our communities? There will be chaos and battles between communities. It's already starting.

Our children don't have museums or art centres, they don't even have TVO, and now you will take away our libraries. People on social assistance don't get the so-called extras in our rural municipalities, things like refrigerators or furniture, and now you want to take us back to the time when they will be lucky to get just a bus ticket out of town. Don't force us to these decisions. Don't force us to this meanness. We must stop these dangerous moves here in Toronto before the rest of the province is destroyed.

The Harris government may think it's just the Metro municipalities that don't like its restructuring scheme, that the rural parts of the province where Tory support has been strong won't care, that they will be happy to see Toronto pushed around. Well, I've got news for you: We are not that mean-spirited and we're not that stupid. Please withdraw Bill 103 and the accompanying plan to download costs of services to municipalities.

**Mr Silipo:** Thank you very much, Ms Eisner Theilheimer. A couple of questions if we have the time to deal with them. The first is on the point you made in the last part of your presentation around the implications this has for the rest of the province. Going back to the beginning of your presentation, as someone from Toronto, I'm more than conscious of this, as you put it, love-to-hate-Toronto attitude that exists. Sometimes it's quite jovial; sometimes unfortunately it's real.

I agree with you that certainly if this government is able to do what it's proposing to do here in Metropolitan Toronto, then let all smaller communities beware that they can have their democratic rights trodden on in a much more sweeping way than we've seen to date. Is that understanding growing out there, as far as you can tell, whether it's in the part of Ontario you come from or in other small communities, as you see it?

**Ms Eisner Theilheimer:** I would say it's definitely growing. I would say there's the beginning of a desperation, certainly as far as municipal councils go, the idea particularly of the downloading, the idea that there's going to be all these expenses they are going to have to

take up. That's going to force them to move much more quickly than they want to on any kind of amalgamation because there's absolutely no way that individual municipalities, where there might be 350 ratepayers or 1,000 ratepayers, or in a big one a couple of thousand ratepayers, can pay for their social services, that they can pay for a home for seniors, for child care, any of those things.

There's a great deal of desperation. There are already arguments between municipalities about how they're going to ever manage firefighting and whose equipment gets used. It's creating great havoc and it's just starting.

**Mr Silipo:** I wonder if you could also comment on your sense, as a relative newcomer to the city, on what you've seen within Metropolitan Toronto in terms of the response to Bill 103 particularly. One government member, I gather, has described the anti-amalgamation forces as coming really from inner-city lefties. It's my sense that while good, inner-city lefties are very much part of that opposition, in fact it's a very much spread out genuine citizens' movement that seems to bring in all sorts of people from all walks of life.

**Ms Eisner Theilheimer:** I'd say absolutely. I've been amazed at it. I don't know how political Toronto can get, but this has been just remarkable. The older Italian lady across the street has put up a sign in her yard. People all over the place have put up signs.

**The Vice-Chair:** I'm sorry, I must interrupt. We've gone past time. Thank you very much, Ms Eisner Theilheimer, for coming here today.

1730

#### SHEILA KUMAR SARO KUMAR

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Sheila Kumar, please, and Saro. Good afternoon and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Sheila Kumar:** Good afternoon, Madam Chairperson, members of the committee and all of you who are here in the endeavour to create and foster democracy in Ontario. It's good to come here today and register my opposition to the passage of Bill 103, which proposes the amalgamation of Toronto with the surrounding cities.

I urge you to withdraw this bad bill. The people on whom some of you wish to foist these changes manifestly do not want them. People who live in free countries do not willingly permit those who are elected to represent them to implement poorly planned, poorly evidenced laws to jeopardize the civility and prosperity of their communities, and prosperity is a shaky, ill-distributed commodity in Ontario right now. We jeopardize it at our peril. I believe that the widespread, vigorous community opposition we see all around us now is the beginning of the end of this bill.

I have lived in the city of Toronto for the last 16 years. Prior to that I lived in the outer suburbs of Chicago, Illinois; Abingdon, Oxfordshire; Geneva, Switzerland; Glasgow, Scotland; London, England; southwest France; Singapore; and various other parts of Britain. I could have chosen to settle in Switzerland or England or various parts of the US; I chose to settle here.

I have experienced a variety of forms of municipal government and, in particular, a variety of styles of city

life. Here in Toronto I often reflect on the contrast between Chicago and my home here. I recollect Chicago as a place where the affluent knew about as much as there is to know about grabbing dollars and displaying a lavish lifestyle. What a pity for them, I thought, that the best they could do with all that affluence was to have intricate discussions about the precautions one needed to take to be reasonably confident of making it alive from the underground car park to the art gallery, the fine dining restaurant or wherever.

What a mistake I believe it would be to move closer to that model of city life. It may look glossy and enticing in some ways if you drive through on vacation, but believe me, you do not want to start your day by listening to the list of last night's murders on the radio each day.

Listening as closely as I could and at great length to the proponents of these measures to try and discover what they hope to achieve by them, I have yet to hear a single evidence-supported convincing argument from them. Instead, I have heard those who oppose this bill accused repeatedly of being afraid of change, of being negative or solely motivated to protect narrow, marginal interests. I find these accusations insulting and thoroughly inaccurate and a poor mask for a lack of solid, good reason for bringing in these measures.

I haven't lived in the many places I have lived because I am afraid of change. I badly want all our precious tax dollars, many of which are paid by or lost to poor people who can ill afford them, to be used with the greatest efficacy possible, and for the most part my interests are surely the same as most of my fellow Torontonians.

My daughter is going to make a few remarks now.

**Ms Saro Kumar:** Thank you for letting me speak today. I'm a grade 10 student at a high school in Toronto and I wanted to speak here because I feel that the proposed changes that will be brought in by Bill 103 will change my life and the lives of my friends and neighbours.

I've heard time and time again Mr Leach and other members of this government talk about the necessity of the amalgamation of Metro. It will reduce waste and duplication, they say. However, he fails to convince me of reasoning behind this bill.

I've been told in school that Metropolitan Toronto is similar in population to that of all the Maritime provinces. Am I to understand that Mr Leach thinks that those provinces are lavish or irresponsible if they fail to amalgamate all their services as he proposes to do in Metro, or does he think that because we live in a densely populated area we can be herded like cattle into inflexible mega-departments? After all, if one fire department makes sense for this huge city, why stop there? An Ontario fire department seems reasonable, or even all of Canada. Just think of the savings.

I like my city. I like that I can, and do, sit on a committee on Metro council to help with an issue that I'm concerned with. I like its vibrancy and its relative safety. I don't want it changed for the worse, as I'm sure this bill will do. Don't let this city fall into the classic textbook example of United States urban core decay. Let it be the textbook example of a good city. Listen to our democratic voices and stop Bill 103.

**Ms Sheila Kumar:** I have one more point to make. In the absence of sound, convincing arguments, I am left to speculate as to what is behind these measures. It seems to me most likely that this is a means of reducing the obligation of the affluent to contribute to the good of the community. I think that will backfire badly. Or are you simply hoping to make a whole generation of senior appointments with the kinds of benefits we have recently learned that Mr Leach enjoys from his previous employment?

Don't do it. It won't work. Thank you.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much. We have a moment here for questions. We'll ask the government caucus, Mr Parker.

**Mr Parker:** Thank you very much for your presentation. You mentioned that the prosperity of communities may be jeopardized as a result of Bill 103 and you give the example of Chicago as something that we don't want to emulate. Is downtown Chicago amalgamated with its surrounding suburbs?

**Ms Sheila Kumar:** I can't tell you about the structure of municipal government there, but the reason I refer to it in the context of the changes that are proposed is to speak up for the quality of life that we have here in Toronto and because I am familiar with how we maintain that here. I can't comment on the structure of municipal government there.

**Mr Parker:** I'm interested in how you see Bill 103 affecting the prosperity of our community and why you bring Chicago in as an example.

**Ms Sheila Kumar:** What is real prosperity? What does it profit a man if he gains the whole megacity if he loses the security and safety to enjoy it?

**Mr Parker:** Bill 103 will bring that about?

**Ms Sheila Kumar:** Yes, I think that it may.

**Mr Parker:** How will that happen?

**Ms Sheila Kumar:** Because you're destroying the networks, the communities, the way of handling things that we've grown up with here and you're replacing it with larger electoral districts, which I think are less likely to give people what they need.

**Mr Parker:** How are communities destroyed as a result of Bill 103?

**Ms Sheila Kumar:** None of us knows. None of us has a crystal ball. None of us can predict exactly what will happen. I've watched Mr Leach asked many times how he views the impact of these changes and he doesn't seem to have a very clear idea either.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Kumar, and Saro. We have run out of time.

1740

#### BOB FRANKFORD

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call upon Dr Bob Frankford, please. Good afternoon and welcome — I think welcome back — to the hearings here today.

**Dr Bob Frankford:** I appreciate the opportunity of coming here to speak on Bill 103. My name is Bob Frankford. Among the topics I will mention is that of homelessness and the municipal hostel system. With me in the audience are some staff and residents of Seaton House, where I work as a daily physician. Like other

citizens, they are interested in the implications of the proposed legislation, but any comments I make are my own.

In the time available I would like to draw on my personal involvement in a couple of areas. Members of the committee have had the privilege of participating in the most comprehensive and articulate discussion about how we should be organizing our municipal governments and urban areas. You have heard some of the most respected and thoughtful people around, some of whom, like Jane Jacobs, can be considered world class by any standards, though as a modest person it's probably an epithet she would hate. It's disappointing that the committee decided not to follow the advice given when originally established to move out and make the hearings accessible to people in Etobicoke, in the Yorks — East, North, and plain vanilla "city of" — and in Scarborough, the city I know best.

Two topics I would like to spend some time on are local economic development and dealing with the homeless.

Jane Jacobs gained much of her reputation from clearly identifying the central role of cities in the development of healthy economies. She and others see a difference in urbanization and suburbanization. A city does not become one just by proclaiming itself so and labelling the city hall and the adjacent shopping area as the city centre. Cities as economic successes have an organic nature and can appear quite messy as they form. Jane's observations give us the benefit of rules that can be applied to the development of real cities as safe and attractive places for both residents and visitors.

If we look closely, we can see an evolution of the city of Scarborough towards urbanization. It may not be obvious, but it seems to me that, to name one locality, Kennedy Road is becoming increasingly lively and that this local economic development and revival is being moved forward by the existence of a business improvement area.

As the committee is probably aware, this BIA arrangement is a local levy, essentially an extra tax put towards the economic development of a defined area. This seems to me an excellent model of a type of local participant initiative, but this is dramatically different from the local planning committees that we are led to believe, though without any clear details in Bill 103, will be produced by the government in the belated acknowledgement that megacity is far too centralized for even its most unremitting supporters. The BIA has a budget to work with, the ability to decide on its priorities and spend accordingly and, to complete the circle, accountability to its participants. I'm not particularly enamoured with many American political ideas, but we know that they would vehemently argue for "no taxation without representation" and the complementary "no representation without taxation," ie, to be effective, local bodies need funds to spend and some influence over the taxation process. I agree with this.

I know that the Kennedy Road BIA and its executive director, Brian Hull, have worked closely with the city of Scarborough staff and elected officials. If the predicted mega-chaos of the megacity comes to pass, who will they

talk to, elected officials or staff of the one mega-planning departments we are constantly reminded of? Most likely neither for the first year, while people decide what labels to put on filing cabinets and how to get computers to talk to each other.

My life in Ontario over the years I have lived here has revolved around Kingston Road, and I have seen this important thoroughfare change and, in many ways, decline economically. I was very pleased when I was a member of this Legislature that we were able to get a Jobs Ontario grant of about \$50,000 for a Kingston Road study. This was channelled through the city of Scarborough planning department and has led to geographical and economic studies, as well as community consultations. None of this is simple and it takes time to approach a consensus, but again I worry about what would certainly be delayed and most likely lost in the mega-chaos of amalgamation. We're not talking about something that can be defined in conventional accounting dollar terms, since that neglects the volunteer time given by the local residents and the hardworking small businesses and motel owners looking for a secure and attainable vision of the future.

What are the costs of loss of continuity and of institutional memory? I do not believe they are calculated in exercises such the KPMG study, but they certainly exist somewhere.

I would like to move to another aspect of local government that I have become very involved with. I work daily as a physician at Seaton House, the country's largest shelter for men, part of the hostel system which itself is a responsibility of Metropolitan Toronto. In the time that I have worked there I have become a strong defender of Seaton House and the hostel system. The challenges are constant, the difficulties are many, but I have observed and worked along with an intelligent administration and a dedicated unionized staff dealing with the most deprived and needy. There is support from the political and bureaucratic levels at Metro that is reflected in an increased capital budget proposed for this year and a commitment to new and diversified programs.

But does working at this amalgamated level and supporting what is done there make me a supporter of amalgamation? No. Let me point out to you that Metropolitan Toronto's hostel system is not just a shelter for the homeless of Metro. I do not have time to explain the complex composition of our population in Seaton House, but let me assure you that we are constantly receiving people from within the GTA, from other parts of the province and from other parts of the country.

Like many others, I am perplexed that amalgamation within Metro is somehow seen as a panacea. It is co-ordination between regions as recommended by Golden that I see as the real priority. Why should we be the recipients of hardship, job loss, housing loss, psychiatric breakdowns in the Durhams and Peels? Right now we have superior but overstretched facilities in Metro.

So far, I've restrained myself from mentioning the downloading of social services spending to municipalities. Clearly the proposed package will only encourage the dumping of cases by outside regions on Metro, or its successor, and the chances of outside areas taking the

initiative to develop their own innovative hostel programs, in my opinion, are zero.

Clearly, we need reform and integration within many different areas. I bring to you a couple of models of change in progress which I believe can produce more for less. There are some changes which may be beyond the scope of the provincial government package but which may be of far greater importance. I'm thinking in particular of the funding of social services. You have heard many times of how inappropriate it is to pay for these out of property taxes. The federal government has much greater control of the taxes that are broad-based and progressive. Why should we not negotiate for an uploading of the costs of the most basic human needs?

I want to make my position clear that I do not believe this bill and the accompanying proposed changes in legislation can be subject to small amendments. The overall approach is so flawed that the whole package needs to be withdrawn.

Finally, as a former elected politician, I want to express my opposition to the view that difficulties we experience are due to too many politicians. It's a cynical view, propounded by people who do not realize the complexity and necessity of the democratic political process. It is said that the cure for the problems of democracy is more democracy. I concur.

The privilege of being an elected representative gives one access to research, to input from all quarters and the opportunity for reasoned debate. This bill has produced a reaction and a public debate unprecedented in my 30 years in this province. There's nothing wrong with gradual reform based on a vigorous debate with input from all quarters. I suggest and hope for your going forward within the parliamentary tradition to produce the changes that really will benefit us all as citizens of this great province.

**1750**

**Mr Patten:** How much time do I have?

**The Vice-Chair:** Two and a half minutes.

**Mr Patten:** Dr Frankford, welcome back to Queen's Park. I really appreciate your observations, especially from your background as an elected member, and I agree with you in that I don't share the somewhat cynical view propagated that politicians are somehow not worthy of the responsibility. I share your view very much.

I suppose one message that I hear you talking about is that, by amalgamation and having fewer politicians and having a greater sense of responsibility, and I think necessarily a larger or at least more removed bureaucracy, the sensitivity of that political system necessarily will not see what you see, or feel what you feel, or be able to relate to the services that you have with people who are homeless, or hopefully formerly living on the street. Is that part of your message?

**Dr Frankford:** Yes, indeed. As I mentioned, I'm very concerned about disruption; that if there is a break from existing government structures, much will be lost, the expertise both at the elected politician's level and at the bureaucratic level. I have really come to respect, in the sector of Metropolitan Toronto that I know, the expertise and the vision that exists there.

**Mr Patten:** You alluded to Ann Golden's recommended model, which was not this unified model, that it

was an acknowledgement of different communities but had a larger regional government, but kept in place the local structures.

**The Vice-Chair:** Mr Patten, I'm sorry, I must interrupt you. We've run out of time. Thank you very much, Mr Frankford, for coming here today.

### JASON YING

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Jason Ying, please. Good afternoon, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Jason Ying:** Most of the points I bring up here most of you will already have heard, but I restate most of them.

In today's age when cities compete for global investment and recognition, a unified metropolis has a definite advantage over its smaller parts. There are many advantages and several disadvantages toward having a megacity. The long-term benefits are crucial to the financial wellbeing of the city and of its government.

I'll go through the advantages and the disadvantages first.

By creating one city instead of seven, as you know, this will reduce the overlapping of services currently. As the seven local governments compete against each other, this will eliminate waste, duplication and overlap and improve accountability and efficiency. It will also mean better decision-making. The proposed new city council will be able to make better decisions that impact long-term growth and development of a unified Toronto. As the KPMG study concluded, \$865 million could be saved over three years by having one government. Another \$300 million could be saved each year after.

A unified government may create new jobs and attract more investment, as people outside Metro may not understand where exactly cities such as Etobicoke and North York are, and allow Torontonians to speak to the world with one voice.

Moreover, a megacity will reduce the size of government. Municipal politicians, as you know, would be reduced to 44 plus the mayor from 106. Each councillor will thus serve about 50,000 residents, working closely within the neighbourhood committees to understand and act upon the concerns of the residents.

On the other side, the possible disadvantage which could exist is the deterioration of community and social services within each local municipality. Items such as provincial downloading of welfare, public housing and nursing homes should also be noted.

North York Councillor John Filman and Mel Lastman noted also that an increase of property taxes in the amount of 19% could occur and also the decrease of North York's high standard of services, such as twice-a-week garbage collection and snowplowing.

Although the province has proposed to take over the responsibility for education, it's downloading a lot responsibilities for major social programs to municipalities. It has been said that these proposed changes will cost Metro taxpayers almost \$400 million more per year, on average, a 10% increase in property taxes. Also, paying for a greater share of welfare and other programs through higher property taxes could discourage new investment and drive existing jobs out of Metro.

Furthermore, opponents claim that in megacities politicians are less accessible. Big governments mean that control of your neighbourhoods will frequently be in the hands of people removed from the community, such as in such cities as New York or LA, where successive movements have grown because of people's dissatisfaction with mega-governments.

In conclusion, however, the need to cut government debt and deficit is important. Budgetary restraints are definitely necessary. Reduction in government duplication is definitely a move in the right direction. At the same time, we must not let the public get out of touch with their elected representatives. Communities must not deteriorate through the neglect of government services.

Finally, the downloading of responsibilities will just result in the shifting of money coming out of the property taxpayers' pockets. This is unfair also. No doubt the government cannot stay with the status quo; it must constantly improve the structure and way of doing things, as long as the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

**The Chair:** Mr Silipo, you have a little more than four minutes.

**Mr Silipo:** I just want to be clear. You've done a fairly good job of listing the pros and cons of the arguments that have been before us. I gather it's fair to say at the end of the day that you line up on the side of those who are in favour of the proposal, although you have some concerns about how it's going to be put together. Would that be a fair summary of your position?

**Mr Ying:** That would be a fair summary. In the long term, I think the benefits outweigh the disadvantages. However, there are a lot of issues which still have to be either changed or amended in the proposed bill. It's good to see right now that a lot of amendments are taking place. I definitely agree that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages in the long run.

**Mr Silipo:** You'd like to see the disadvantages dealt with so that we don't get into those problems you identified, the increases in property taxes, decreases in services. If those could be done, then you'd like the government to proceed.

What is your response to what is happening and what will likely happen next week with the referendum if in fact a majority, however large or small that may be, of people across Metropolitan Toronto in the referendum say no to the megacity? Would you say the government at that point has an obligation to stop and to figure out a way to deal with that issue, to talk with people, to look at what the alternatives might be, or do you think it should just proceed with what it's doing?

**Mr Ying:** I definitely think that if the vote is no, they should take into consideration the people's views and try to come up with a compromise on the terms of the bill.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Ying, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

1800

ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS  
INSTITUTE

**The Chair:** Would Valerie Cranmer, Frank Lewinberg and Philip Wong please come forward. Good afternoon

and welcome to the committee. You have 10 minutes today to make a presentation. If there's some time left at the end of your presentation, I'll ask the government caucus to ask questions.

**Ms Valerie Cranmer:** I'm Valerie Cranmer. I'm president of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. With me today is Phil Wong, who is our past president, and Frank Lewinberg, who chaired the committee of our members who prepared our brief on Bill 103.

Our institute represents 2,200 practising planners in the province of Ontario. Our members work for governments, private industry, academic institutions and special agencies, and engage in all practice areas, such as urban and regional community planning, urban design, natural-heritage and environmental planning and environmental assessment.

OPPI is committed to working with the provincial government on policy matters which affect our profession and its practice. We are pleased to have the opportunity to provide our comments on Bill 103 and some of the government's recent announcements about changes in municipal responsibilities and funding for services.

The government has had the courage to face a number of very difficult issues that have plagued Ontario for the last few decades, such as funding for schools, disentanglement of the provincial and municipal governments and the governance of the greater Toronto area. While changes to the existing government structures can be advocated, the institute has identified a number of areas of concern. I've asked Frank Lewinberg to address those concerns briefly.

**Mr Frank Lewinberg:** I'm going to simply read a couple of the extracts from our brief, because it is too long to read in the time allotted.

The OPPI chose not to formally express a position for or against amalgamation of the Metropolitan Toronto municipalities, respecting the diverse public and private sector cross-section of our membership in the community. However, the institute does have specific concerns over process issues, over the relationship between the proposed new city of Toronto and the rest of the GTA and proposed changes to the property tax, all of which are integral to considering the future structure of Metropolitan Toronto.

The decision to amalgamate the municipalities in Toronto is a major change which will take a long time to fully implement and will have a significant impact on many institutions and individuals. If it is not the right decision or it is not done well, the results could be harmful to Toronto, the GTA and all of Ontario.

Bill 103 does not provide the necessary detail to understand the full ramifications of the proposal. For example, due to the lack of information available on community councils and neighbourhood committees and the duties they will assume, it is impossible for OPPI to comment on the appropriateness of these structures for dealing with planning issues. The institute would have serious concerns if it was intended to delegate the authority or responsibility for matters currently vested in municipal councils under the Planning Act to unelected bodies.

OPPI does not support those aspects of Bill 103 that have unelected bodies making decisions on matters which

should be made by accountable, elected politicians. The proposed legislation places the trustees and the transition team in an inappropriate role for which they are unaccountable in any democratic or legal forum.

OPPI would like to see changes to the legislation that will provide time and the information for meaningful and full public discussion of alternatives, encourage participation and reduce to a minimum the role of unelected civil servants in decision-making.

Restructuring Metropolitan Toronto does not solve the key problem. OPPI strongly supports the position that an effective government structure for the whole GTA is needed that can provide the coordination that is required for GTA-wide issues.

The structure of governance for the whole GTA needs to be carefully integrated with the structure for the constituent municipalities. It makes no sense to first create a new structure for Toronto, the centre, and later address the structural issues of the remainder of the GTA. The structure for Toronto should be delayed until the enactment of a new structure for the overall GTA so that the whole can be evaluated comprehensively as one integrated and balanced system of governance.

OPPI supports the government's proposal to disentangle itself from the provision of hard services such as roads, water and sewage disposal which are related to the use of property, the costs of which are fairly predictable and largely within the control of municipal governments.

The government has proposed to substantially increase municipal funding responsibilities for social programs such as welfare, family benefits, long-term care, public health and social housing. Taxing property to pay for income support programs will risk the quality of life and potentially the survival of many of Ontario's municipalities. During a recession, these tax changes would pose a danger to small towns which depend on a few industries. The closure or decline of a major employer will create a downward spiral of higher social service demands with resulting higher property taxes on a shrinking tax base. The impact on that community would be to exacerbate the problems and lead to abandonment by those who can afford to do so.

This process would also have a major negative effect on Ontario's larger centres, where most of the social housing and welfare recipients are located. The higher property taxes resulting from the increased funding responsibilities for social programs relative to those of nearby suburban towns and cities would cause a flight of businesses and residents to the low-tax suburban communities. This is likely to create the urban problems of social segmentation, abandonment and decline associated with many cities in the United States, a fate that has been spared most Canadian cities to this point in our history.

OPPI strongly recommends that income redistribution not be placed on property taxes and that the many other taxation alternatives that have been put forward by the Who Does What panel and others be considered.

These matters relate directly to the issues contained in Bill 103 and provide further reasoning for the bill to be delayed until these important matters are fully analysed and worked out.

**Mr Philip Wong:** To conclude, OPPI represents a profession that has learned the value of public participa-

tion in planning matters. Such participation is an essential component in the ultimate acceptance and successful implementation of any plan. It is critical for this government to create such a climate of consensus when dealing with the complexities of local government, one that has been undertaken largely on a non-partisan basis in Ontario until now.

We respectfully request the government to take more time, to offer more information and undertake a comprehensive approach to these changes. We are prepared to work with the government and offer any assistance our institute can bring to seeking such an understanding.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We have about a minute and a half for a quick question from Mrs Munro.

**Mrs Munro:** I want to come to page 3 of your presentation. In the last paragraph there before the heading "Changes to the Municipal Role," you have made reference to the need for governance of the whole GTA. I know this has been mentioned by a number of presenters. If we were to look at that concern you've raised, does this mean we're looking at the status quo for Toronto as it is right now? If so, who would represent Toronto, then, in a greater Toronto designation, as you suggest here?

**Mr Lewinberg:** I believe there have been a number of models put forward, particularly by Golden but also by others, in which an integrated structure, really a widened regional level of government, or not quite a level of government, has been proposed which would then form the coordinating structure around whatever the municipal structure below that would be. We haven't taken a position on what the structure of Metropolitan Toronto might be, but we think it's important that the overall coordinating level of structure be defined first, because as you are aware, there are still the regional governments existing in the other areas. It's very difficult to understand how this new megacity would relate to such a new structure when the others are in transition.

**Mrs Munro:** My question comes from the idea of, which level of Metro would you be talking to, then, in discussion on a GTA? Would you imagine that you're talking to individual cities or are you talking to Metro council?

**Mr Lewinberg:** One would talk to both, I would presume, at the moment — they both exist — as you would with Mississauga and Peel. You'd talk to both at the moment, which I believe the government is doing.

**The Chair:** Thank you for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

The committee stands in recess until 7 o'clock.

*The committee recessed from 1810 to 1903.*

#### ED PHILIP

**The Chair:** Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Our first presenter this evening is Ed Philip. Welcome back, Mr Philip, former member for Etobicoke-Rexdale, I believe.

**Mr Ed Philip:** That's correct. Thank you, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. It's a pleasure for me to be here this evening and to express the concerns of the residents of northern Etobicoke, neighbours of mine whom I represented for almost 20 years in the Legislature. I have met with many of them in the last few weeks

and indeed have met with many groups, and they're very upset about this legislation.

I feel I have some knowledge of the problem, since I was the Minister of Municipal Affairs and minister responsible for the department of the greater Toronto area in the last government, the NDP government. We understood that these are complex problems, problems of integration of services in the greater Toronto area. My neighbours recognize that. Many of the services they are using are from the Mississauga and Peel region, and many people using our services live there. So we understand the need for integrating services. We understand the need to make Metro Toronto a strong economic entity to deal with what is being called the hole in the middle of the doughnut.

That is why we established the task force that was starting to build consensus, a task force whose work was stopped by the Conservative government. The recommendations of Anne Golden and her task force have been completely discarded by the Conservative government. Mr Harris threw out the Golden task force report, a report that showed how \$1 billion per year could be saved in the greater Toronto area.

It's unfortunate that the process here is so different from the process that was followed under Bill Davis as Premier and under David Peterson and under Bob Rae, a process in which complex issues like this would have had papers sent out for discussion and comment, more papers sent out for further discussion and then hearings, hearings in individual localities. I can tell you that the people in Rexdale, and indeed some of my friends in Scarborough, greatly resent that the Conservative members on this committee decided not to have this committee go as far as their communities. One has to ask, who are the Conservatives hiding from? The people of Ontario.

I can tell you that the people in Etobicoke are strongly opposed to this legislation. An independent poll released only a couple of days ago shows that the people in Etobicoke are overwhelmingly opposed. Indeed the northern part of Etobicoke, particularly with regard to wards 10, 11 and 12, has percentages like 72% saying no to 28% in favour. That's what the people of Etobicoke are telling this government loudly and clearly.

Why is this Republican government — it's the only way to describe it; if you knew Bill Davis and people like that back then, you'd have to describe them as Republicans rather than Conservatives — so determined to pass legislation which is contrary to what the public is telling it, contrary to what the Conservative Party task force recommended, a task force that Mr Leach and indeed Mr Kells from Etobicoke were on, a task force chaired by a prominent Conservative, Joyce Trimmer? Why are they going contrary, in their downloading, to the recommendations of the Crombie commission that was set up by this Conservative government? Why, if Premier Harris really wants to deal with the issues of integration, has he refused to even consider the recommendations of the Golden task force, which shows very clearly that there are ways of doing that and saving tax money?

What we're really about in this legislation is the downloading of services on to the municipalities and downloading of costs on to the taxpayers so that we will

get more bureaucracy, higher taxes, a pass-on equivalent of \$11,000 more per business in the Metro area and an average of \$490 more to the average home owner. You only have to use common sense to see how unfair this is. Go to the Rexdale GO station in my area where I live and you find out that 50% of the people using that service are from outside the Metro Toronto area, but thanks to the downloading of this government, we in Metro will be paying for their transportation or a large part of it.

**Welfare:** In the last recession, one out of every two people who were on welfare in Metro came from outside the Metropolitan Toronto area. We as Metropolitan Toronto residents will be paying for the poor of the whole province instead of just our own people when the next recession hits, and we've seen what's that done in the United States and in other countries where welfare has been put on the backs of the ratepayers, of the home owners, of the apartment dwellers. It's meant that some municipalities have gone into bankruptcy.

Let's talk about some of the democracy issues. To become mayor of this megacity, you will need a campaign fund of over \$1 million. Who is going to be able to pay that? Surely what we will end up with is a mayor who is answering to the developers, the only people who can give those kinds of campaign funds.

A paper presented to your committee yesterday by Etobicoke residents Janice Etter and Rhonda Swarbrick pointed out to you that your government, the government of Mike Harris, amputated large chunks of the Planning Act that the NDP government had introduced, a Planning Act that curbed costly and inefficient sprawl and protected the environment, but now you have to go further with this act. You want the developers in the mayor's seat, and that's what you're doing with this legislation.

I want to say to you that the people of Etobicoke, the people of Rexdale, are very, very strongly opposed to this legislation. They know it will mean increased taxes, that that's the game of downloading on to the municipalities, the game the Conservative government is playing. We say to you, this is not a choice, as our Conservative friends would lead us to believe, between change or no change, between this change or no change. There are a number of choices out there. Anne Golden suggested a number of things that can be done that will solve a lot of the problems we are facing. We have a start here with the Golden report. We need further hearings and further consultations. We need a government position paper.

**1910**

I suggest that Bill 103 is offensive to the principles of democracy, it's offensive to the taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto, it's offensive to those of us who care deeply about our communities and about our environment, and it should be withdrawn with the understanding that there would be further study, that we would deal with the sensible recommendations of David Crombie, that we would deal with the sensible recommendations of Anne Golden and her task force and that we would look at this again.

There are solutions. There are solutions we now know. There are solutions we can put out for further study and further comment. That's the democratic process. That's

the process that people like Roy McMurtry used when he had complicated legislation, the Family Law Reform Act and other pieces of legislation. That was a Conservative Party that was progressive, not the Republican Party that wants to slam through a hidden agenda on the people of Ontario.

I want to thank you for your attention, and I greatly appreciate the attention of all members of the committee.

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you, Mr Philip; good to see you. Welcome to our committee and thanks for the presentation. Evidently you speak with some authority and experience, and you have touched on the vital parts of the bill as it is presented.

This legislation, as it has been presented to us, is contrary to all the others, such as the Golden report, the Trimmer, the latest one, Mr David Crombie's, reports for which they received considerable input from a number of agencies, apart from the people themselves. The latest one, Mr Crombie's, enjoys a lot of respect from all sides, all people. This is the only one that didn't have any input from anyone whatsoever. When it came to us, Bill 103 came as a time bomb, unexpected really. Do you think this was something the government had already in mind to do?

**Mr Philip:** I don't think the government originally had this in mind. Indeed Mike Harris in the election campaign said he would eliminate Metro Toronto and save the municipalities. That wouldn't have solved the problems of municipalities like Etobicoke, where we have a need for greater coordination with the Peel area and with some of the surrounding areas in the GTA. It certainly wouldn't have solved the problem of the hole in the middle of the doughnut. But that was what he campaigned on and that's why it came as a complete shock to many of us. We thought he would keep his election promise and indeed do away with Metro Toronto — what he would replace it with he didn't say, but do away with Metro Toronto — and our communities and our councils that we've learned to work with over the years would be preserved.

What's particularly frightening is that at the same time they've done that, they've gutted the Planning Act. Therefore, people are concerned that their environment, their communities are going to be badly hurt as well under this type of legislation.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Philip, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

#### BRENT LARSON

**The Chair:** Would Brent Larson please come forward. Good evening, Mr Larson. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Brent Larson:** Thank you very much. I'd like to offer all the members of the Ontario Legislature, those who are here and those who are not here, a new criterion, a new standard by which to judge Bill 103 and the rest of the mega-legislation surrounding it, for despite what some say, none of this is yet a done deal. Difficult as it may be, each of you still has the power to vote any way you wish.

To provide you with this new criterion and to give you a far larger perspective so you can see just how momentous and historic this final decision will be, I am invoking

a free spirit from the past. It is the spirit of the Englishman who sparked the original Common Sense Revolution of 1776 with his pamphlet, *Common Sense*. I am invoking the spirit of the man who has been called the first citizen of the world and, by the computer magazine *Wired*, the moral father of the Internet: Tom Paine.

I am not doing so for the frivolous reason that *Common Sense* is also, by coincidence, the name that the Ontario government has given to its revolution. Rather, I am doing so because the basic political choice Tom Paine laid out so brilliantly for humanity 200 years ago in his *Common Sense* and in *The Rights of Man* is the very same basic political choice facing you in Bill 103 and facing us all in Ontario and around the world as we move into the 21st century. The same basic political choice at the heart of both the American and French revolutions is again ours to make.

This most fundamental of all political choices is the one between two opposing structures of government which are deadly enemies of each other. One of these structures is that of top-down, hierarchical power, where the ultimate decisions that shape society are made by élite masters, invariably, as history shows, for their own benefit. In this dictatorial structure, the élite masters are the sovereign. The other structure is totally different. Here the ultimate decisions that shape society are made by the whole population affected by them, as they participate as equal citizens in their community seeking the common good. In this interactive structure, the people themselves are the sovereign.

I believe the masters' structure is best symbolized by the pyramid and the people's structure by the circle. A pyramid of power or a circle of power? This is the fundamental choice confronting us. This is the eternal standard by which to judge all government action.

The difficulty for us at the dawn of the 21st century is recognizing the pyramid. In Paine's day it was easily identified: hereditary monarchy. In the 20th century the pyramid structure has taken on different colourings and packagings, different ideological justifications, from left-wing Communism to right-wing Fascism, which reminds us that our choice between the pyramid and the circle is not at all a left/right issue. It is the people versus the masters.

Unfortunately, today's emerging pyramid of power has largely been able to cloak itself in invisibility, but recently some people have started pointing at it. For example, the Toronto Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice does so in this poster here, which is called "Exposing the Face of Corporate Rule."

To see the peak of this new world pyramid, we have to look way, way up, beyond local governments, beyond provincial governments, beyond national governments. Way up there, the men at the top of the new mega-pyramid are attempting to use the vast wealth they control to set the world's political agenda and to reshape the world's society. They are doing this through a small and diminishing number of transnational corporate conglomerates and through a handful of transnational financial organizations, which in effect make up a new, unacknowledged and unelected transnational government.

These new élite masters, who come from several countries and have allegiance to no countries, are remark-

ably similar to the old monarchs so hated by Tom Paine. Like the kings of old, they too have the potential to be hereditary rulers, as their wealth is transferred to new generations. Like the kings of old, they too are surrounded by courtiers all too ready to justify their masters' power, not this time as the divine right of kings but rather as the natural consequence of the global market, the global economy — the only god these new masters recognize, the god of money.

These new élite masters are not conspirators but, like the kings, rulers at the top of a pyramid structure. Like the kings, they are determined builders of empire, on the backs of at least 90% of the world's population. Already this world is so under their reign that 358 billionaires own 47% of the world's wealth.

This new pyramid government needs a name, a name to make it visible for what it is, the new enemy of the people. I would therefore like to introduce a brand-new word here for the 21st century's pyramid of dictatorial power: corpocracy, the global corpocracy. Those who support it might be called corpocrats, though, since this is a mouthful, let's nickname them corpses. It fits since they are on the side of death, the death of individual citizens with civil rights, the death of cities and the civilization they make possible, the death indeed of our fragile planet itself.

#### 1920

Moving towards this emerging global corpocracy is moving back in time, way back to the feudalism of the dark Middle Ages, an ancient repression which is being intensified by state-of-the-art technology.

The most basic and profound question facing you, as elected members of the Ontario Legislature, is whether or not Bills 103 and 104 and 107 and all the others move Ontario further into the grip of the global corpocracy, making Ontario more a minor branch plant of the global masters. Any legislation which moves real political power up and away from the people does so. Any legislation which has the overall effect of making the rich richer at the expense of everyone else by, for example, opening up public services for their exploitation does so.

I'll say nothing here about the announced reason for the worldwide cuts in social programs: to pay down the deficit and the debt, which actually means a massive transfer of money mostly to the rich from the poor and the middle. But before making your mega-decision, I hope you'll also consider the proposed tax cut, which seems to be the primary motivation behind all the mega-bills here in Ontario. However good it may sound, any income tax cut made as a percentage widens the ever-growing gap between the rich and everyone else. You see, 30% off thousands of dollars due is real money, while 30% off only a little isn't so much, and 30% off nothing is nothing at all.

If you do decide that this is all pyramid legislation, which is what the evidence indicates, then voting against it is most certainly not a negative act, for saying no to the pyramid is saying yes to the circle. While the pyramid is the corpocracy, the circle is of course democracy. This is not a throwback at all, not even to the sort of democracy Tom Paine advocated, nor is voting for democracy voting for the status quo — far from it. Democracy is a

circular political structure. Circles can roll with the times. It is a wheel we want for movement, not a pyramid.

We democrats have been criticized for being naysayers, for saying no, no, no to every proposed change. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are saying yes, yes, yes to democracy, to the greatest, most promising, most glorious change of all: an expanding grass-roots democracy.

But the government of Ontario has rushed everything at such a mad pace there is no time to present this very real alternative. There is not even time here now for me to read from this.

This is a positive, 21st-century declaration of democracy, modelled not on Tom Paine's work but on that of his friend and his betrayer, Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence. This new document, which states six founding principles of grass-roots democracy, may help guide the spreading democracy revolution, which here in Ontario has been sparked by the so deceptively named Common Sense Revolution. This declaration of democracy will be available, after a bit of polishing, for any citizen's consideration and perhaps signature.

Let me emphasize in closing that this is not a party issue. If we are going to get to an expanded democracy it is only through the ever-growing grass-roots movement. All political parties, left and right, are themselves pyramid structures, and in this new age, as we have seen all too frequently, this makes party leadership particularly vulnerable to the mega-pyramid of the global corpocracy and its self-serving agenda: free trade and the GST, the social contract and mega-legislation. This is why Canadians and Americans and Europeans and people all around the world are sick and tired of political parties. We throw out one party after another and all we get is yet another one led by a new élite gang of corpses sporting a different-coloured party tie.

I believe, however, that the true majority of you members of the Ontario Legislature are not composed of corpses but of democrats. The support many of you have expressed, regardless of party affiliation, for the legislation introducing binding referenda is one indication that this is so. This is why the mega-legislation is not a done deal. You do not have to follow the leader.

But the pressure on many of you will be enormous as the mega-voting approaches, from the party pyramids of power. I urge, therefore, before you vote for moving all of Ontario a giant step towards either the pyramid of corpocracy or the circle of democracy, that first you make certain that your own vote is protected by insisting on the democratic circle within the Legislature itself rather than the intimidating pyramid of party discipline. The only way you can guarantee this is by demanding a secret ballot. Your vote is too momentous and too historic for us all to permit it to be anything other than the true expression of your individual soul.

In conclusion, let me say that I and others understand and sympathize with the dilemma so many of you members face. May these famous words of Thomas Paine leap two centuries to give you heart and to give us all heart in the struggles yet to come:

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink

from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered: yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Larson. We've exceeded your allotted time a little, but I want to thank you for coming forward and making your presentation to the committee this evening.

#### BETSY DONALD

**The Chair:** Would Betsy Donald please come forward. Good evening and welcome to the committee.

**Ms Betsy Donald:** Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Betsy Donald and I was a policy adviser on the Golden commission. I'm also completing my PhD in urban regional economics at the University of Toronto, so I spend my days reading about this and the relationship between size and efficiency and the role of local governments in a global economy, and the role of city regions and the new structures that are starting to come into play in London or New York or Toronto. What I want to focus on tonight are the economic implications of Bill 103. I'll start with some of the micro-concerns I have.

It goes back to what many people have been talking about, the whole issue of evidence of cost savings around amalgamating to a large city of 2.3 million. All the evidence I have found — really, there's no serious study that would support delivery of services over about half a million. There are some that suggest one million. However, generally speaking, if you look at the literature in the United States or Britain or Canada, usually they're talking efficiencies around 500,000.

Obviously, this government has to have pretty cogent evidence to support amalgamating the city of Toronto and the other cities into one large city to justify the pure cost savings of amalgamation. What I've been given is the KPMG study. If you look at the study, with all due respect to KPMG, because they're a very solid firm, they simply didn't have enough time to do a lot of the issues. They even say in their report, "We have performed no original data collection or verification against original sources."

Mr Dan Newman will recall that I asked him at the Cabbagetown Historical Preservation meeting, "Is the KPMG study the only evidence you have to support amalgamation?" He said yes, that this is your best evidence. Mr Leach was asked the same question at a meeting the next night at St Paul's Church, "Is this your best evidence you have to support amalgamation?" He said yes.

We have so many reports and so many people saying this just isn't good enough. The latest one is the Deloitte and Touche report that says: "We have not seen put forth any concrete evidence that would support that there are savings of up to \$865 million over the first three years and \$300 million annually thereafter.... There is clearly no one group of people, whether they be consultants, senior bureaucrats or politicians, who can fairly claim that they have a good grasp of the ramifications of a

merger of the seven existing governments of Metro into one new city of Toronto."

This is no basis for passing such a monumental piece of legislation. We need sound public policy evidence to support this kind of amalgamation.

Moving away from the lack of evidence for cost savings, I want to focus on the real issues we should be focusing our energies on, and that is regional coordination. Milt Farrow has started the process, and this is good; we have the Greater Toronto Services Board. But it's only a discussion paper. We see on the first page that we haven't even made recommendations about its authority or its powers, how it should be governed, what types of services it should be concerning itself with, how it should be paid for, what relationship it should have with the municipalities, the public and the province. This is what we should be focusing our energies on. We should be getting this structure set in place. We should be moving this region forward first, before we go ahead and ram Bill 103 forward.

I would submit to you, please hold back on Bill 103 until you've got this in place. Why not work on this and make sure you've got the truly regional issues identified rather than artificially setting up these boundaries between the 416 and the 905 region? Instead of pitting citizen against citizen or region against region, 416 versus 905, which we hear about so much in the media, why don't we start working on this together, working cooperatively, setting this region on the right path for the 21st century?

**1930**

Truly regional coordination means looking at issues around transit and issues around economic development. Economic development isn't just about marketing for the Olympics; it's about providing good, sound physical infrastructure, human capital and social infrastructure for the region, which means we need to have a body that really has some legislative authority and power, power to tax to raise the revenue to do this. My concern is that if we don't do this first, we're going to go back to the same problems we had before.

Obviously, why Golden was set up and what Crombie talked a lot about was that we have this disparity in business property tax between the 416 and the 905. If we could get the regional government set in place first, we could start looking at issues around a uniform commercial-industrial tax rate, which would alleviate some of the tax disparities for business.

I'm just urging you: Why don't you postpone Bill 103 until you have addressed the real regional needs of the region? Then we can start looking at how more local services are going to be delivered.

Thank you very much for your attention. If we have time, I'd be happy to take some questions.

**The Chair:** We do have time. Mr Silipo, a little better than three minutes.

**Mr Silipo:** Ms Donald, thank you very much for your presentation. I start from the last point, which you emphasized a couple of times. As you and others have said to us, the first priority here should be that regional coordination, and only after we've gotten that in place should we be dealing with questions of potential amalgamations of municipalities at the lower level.

Perhaps it's just the optimist in me, but I continue to feel — and I feel reinforced to some extent by the previous presentation of Mr Larson. In terms of understanding our responsibility as legislators, even a government as adamant as that of Mr Harris, it seems to me, cannot just continue to ignore what the population out there is saying in a very clear way. It's not just the experts; it's not just the good work that you and Ms Golden and others did or the recommendations from Mr Crombie; it's also what average citizens out there are saying in this whole discussion we've had the last number of weeks. What they're saying very clearly is that this is just wrong. It's wrong because of the process; it's wrong because of the substance of what it does.

It seems to me that the government has not just an obligation but really an opportunity next week, when the referendum results come in saying no to the amalgamation, for the government to finally turn around and say, "Okay, as a party that believes in the people having a voice and the people continuing to have a voice and needing for that voice to be reflected by the government, we would be prepared now to pause, to look at this whole issue again, to look at the whole question of the GTA structures and issues and, only within that, look at the question of what changes should be made."

I guess I'm looking for whether I'm just dreaming or whether that is the kind of approach that a good and sensible government, even a Mike Harris government, might yet take in the days ahead.

**Ms Donald:** To me, governing is about governing for the people; it's not governing for the people who elected you. It's about compromise, it's about consensus, it's about listening to the experts, listening to the public, listening to all those concerned and really building around that.

We have so much disparity in so many aspects in Canada, if you look at the aboriginal versus non-aboriginal, Quebec versus federalism, environmentalists versus loggers. Let's get beyond all that "us versus them" stuff and let's start working together and building a great Toronto. I'm not a card-carrying anything. In fact, I don't even have a particular love of Toronto. I'm not even from here originally, but I am really concerned about setting this region on the right path for the 21st century.

There's a massive conference coming in April, an urban affairs association. Experts from all over the world in the next few months are coming. The conference is called Meeting the Challenge, looking at new institutions being set up in different city regions around the world. I think a lot of people are coming with some excitement to see what Toronto's doing, because Toronto has always had a reputation for doing things right, for institutional innovation at a time when the economy structurally has changed.

We have an opportunity to do it again. I think Golden made some really good points. I think Crombie had some really good points. We have to do it again. We don't want to ram through Bill 103 without really thinking about those things. A lot of good study has been done. Let's just do it right.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Donald, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

## KEN BRYDEN

**The Chair:** Would Ken Bryden please come forward. Good evening, Mr Bryden. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Ken Bryden:** Thank you, Mr Chair. I'm here because I'm a conservative. Being a conservative, I support the New Democratic Party, since it is the only party in North America today that respects conservative traditions. Permit me to outline some major applications of those values that I support and that lead me to reject the arbitrary decision to herd the residents of Metro Toronto into a huge megacity.

First, the true conservative believes in community. Margaret Thatcher was fond of saying that there is no society, only individuals, thereby denying the entire conservative tradition and embracing instead an extreme form of 19th-century laissez-faire liberalism, tending towards social Darwinism. To the conservative and to me, the individual is inseparable from society, and within the larger society his or her personality can find fulfilment only within a community.

The conservative believes that good local government is a government that is small enough to interact regularly with its communities. One need only visit Metro Hall with its locked doors and unwelcoming ambience to get an inkling of what the Kremlin of the megacity will be like.

Second, the true conservative believes that it is inappropriate to try to fix something that's not broken. The constituent municipalities of Metro Toronto are currently working to the satisfaction of most of their residents. I'm one of the residents, and most of my neighbours think our municipality, which is Toronto, is working reasonably well. Certainly these municipalities are not perfect, but what human institution is?

The only problem that needs major attention is that of coordination between Metro and the rest of the greater Toronto area. Unfortunately, the government's approach to that problem appears to be to appoint an inaccessible and unaccountable board, or perhaps a czar, I'm not quite sure which, but it seems to be heading in the direction of a board, which will simply lay down the law to elected councils. The government would do well to pause and let the significance of the Golden report sink in.

Third, the true conservative believes that the perfect is the enemy of the good. Conservative thinkers over the years have decried what they saw as a destructive drive for perfection in socialism — a valid criticism in regard to some varieties of socialism, notably Marxism. The present government has embarked on a determined drive to tear down what has taken years to build in grasping for perfection.

**1940**

Fourth, the true Conservative believes that constructive change can be achieved only gradually. The present government has thrown caution to the wind and is hell-bent on turning local government upside down, especially in Metro. This can only be counterproductive: destructive of democracy at the local level.

The ill-considered, root-and-branch, full-speed-ahead course on which the government is now careening is the antithesis of conservatism. It is an ideologically driven experiment in social engineering.

Mr Chairman, I don't think I've used up my 10 minutes of fame yet, so perhaps I'd like to make a couple of additional comments on this question of the referendum, which is a good deal in the news. I watched some of your proceedings on the legislative channel here on TV and a couple of weeks ago I heard and saw Mr Gilchrist, I think it was, arguing that referenda are not really appropriate in a parliamentary system of government. Basically I agree with the philosophy he was expounding, although I think he should direct his remarks to the government and not to those of us out here who already agree with him.

There's one place where I think there is pretty wide agreement that referenda are appropriate, and that is in the matter of constitutional change. Bill 103 sets a new constitution for the government of this Metropolitan Toronto area, and if there is anything that is more appropriate for a referendum than that, I just can't conceive of it. Surely when the whole structure under which they operate is being — I was going to say slaughtered — changed in a drastic fashion, the people should have some say in it.

It appears that those who are trying to drive through this amalgamation anticipate that the people are against it and are going to turn them down, so now they're doing everything possible to discredit the referendum. Let me just say that there are difficulties: out-of-date voters lists prepared by the province, which are inadequate; there is the machinery that certainly could be improved. Surely the government could have conducted a referendum in an appropriate and proper way. They have the resources and they could have created a new voters list, so let's not have that criticism.

Also there are arguments about the question, but as the Environics people said today, "Everybody understands what the question is, so let's not quibble about that." I saw some guru in the Star a week or two ago who said he doesn't understand what No will mean. Maybe he wouldn't understand it, but I suggest that anybody with brains at least equal to a jellyfish will understand that No means they don't want it. Surely that's plain.

You can't, in a referendum, cover every possibility under the sun. It's got to be Yes or No or at the very most a choice between two options. I am suggesting that if you don't like the referendum it's because the government didn't conduct it in a proper manner, but the municipalities have done the best they can.

Have I used up my 10 minutes yet?

**The Chair:** You've got about a minute left, if you want to wrap up or take a question.

**Mr Bryden:** I'll take a question.

**Mr Jim Brown (Scarborough West):** Mr Bryden, I think you taught at York University for a period of time, did you not?

**Mr Bryden:** Just for one year. I was mainly at the University of Toronto. I was one year at Atkinson College.

**Mr Jim Brown:** You did such a great job. I was in that course. You actually passed me. Then you must be a conservative, because here I am.

**Mr Bryden:** I'd better revise this, take another look.

**Mr Jim Brown:** But he's a true conservative. He said it. He taught me to be a true conservative.

You seem to think the status quo is okay, that everything is going smoothly.

**Mr Bryden:** I never in my life said anything is going smoothly. As a conservative I never believe anything is going smoothly. All I'm saying is that it's going better, it's going reasonably well, to the satisfaction of most people. But I think we have to do something, as the previous speaker here said, about the relationships between Metro and the rest of the greater Toronto area. That's where the problem is; it's not within Toronto.

**Mr Jim Brown:** But the previous government struggled with this problem as well.

**Mr Bryden:** The previous government at least set up the Golden commission, which has been thrown into the ashcan — a great pity, because it certainly was pointing in the right direction. Golden should have been allowed to complete her work. That was the great problem. She wasn't allowed to fine-tune her report by having public input.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Bryden, for your presentation. I appreciate your coming forward this evening.

#### JENNIFER GREEN

**The Chair:** Would Jennifer Green please come forward. Good evening, Ms Green. Welcome to the committee.

**Ms Jennifer Green:** Good evening. My name is Jennifer Green. I'm a 23-year-old graduate of McMaster University. I'm in first year at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine. I was born and raised in Toronto and I'm a graduate of the Toronto Board of Education. Enough about me; what about you?

You are sitting here before me as elected representatives for the citizens of Ontario. You, like elected municipal representatives, are a product of a democratic process, and I'm hoping that you honour the election that got you where you are today. I urge you to consider, then, how it would feel to have that legitimate democratic election overridden, as this bill plans to do to the municipal representatives.

Let us begin with the broader issue beyond Bill 103, the manner in which this government is ramming through major legislation, Bill 103, Bill 104, massive changes to the municipalities, the proposed downloading of soft services to municipalities. My concern is that this government is being a poor role model for youth of the province.

In bypassing the proper civil discourse, political discourse and democratic process which are essential before making such huge changes to the province, I fear, I'm actually embarrassed, for the youth of this province that this is being held up as an example of democracy, because I don't feel that it is. Even these public hearings and the referendum itself I feel are just a pretence for the government to say there has been some public consultation. There has not. None of the details of the proposed amalgamation were discussed during the election, and I think it is becoming quite clear that there is no mandate from the people to ram through such changes. The youth deserve, all of the citizens deserve, that when major

structural changes with such widespread impacts for the future are being made, there is time to be taken to gain a greater consensus.

Back to the issue of overriding the decisions of elective municipal representatives: I feel this is undemocratic and that it leaves far too much room for party politics to enter into municipal affairs. The agenda of centralizing power is unhealthy for democracy and it is also dangerous. Centralizing power allows for the rise of extremism, whether it be from the far left or from the far right. This is dangerous when unchecked. Centralized power may suit the needs of the Harris government at present, but it could just as easily swing the other way if another party were to come to power. The Liberals held power in this province for 40 years and they did so because they governed from the centre, and generally from consensus, so I'm urging that you take the lessons of history. Let us also take from the lessons of history when looking at other examples of amalgamations: Halifax, New York, London. These megacities have proven to be inefficient and to deprive citizens of input.

We have heard financial arguments, such as the one presented earlier, and also from people such as Andrew Sancton, Wendell Cox, Joseph Kushner. The evidence is simply not conclusive that it will save money. If the government does want to save money, which I agree should happen, then these changes can be made, these cost savings can be made within the existing structure instead of just trying to create an entirely new structure.

As a youth, I feel that this bill paints a bleak picture for youth. Residential taxation will rise. What does that mean? Higher rent. As well, we have a prediction from the Metro board of trade that local business will be devastated. I assume that because of the higher property taxes, new businesses will be discouraged from entering the area. How does that impact on summer jobs? I feel there are a lot of risks here. That, coupled with the enormous burden of tuition increases, is just adding up to too much for the students of this province to handle.

#### 1950

As a naturopathic medical student I study the primary determinants of health. These are employment, environment, family support and community network. The existing system, although not perfect, supports the health of Metro citizens through its day cares, its parks and rec services, its public transit, its care for the elderly, its healthy city program and its AIDS initiatives. These programs work in improving people's lives and they work because they are specific and unique to the communities they are addressing. I fear that these programs will be lost when professional politicians from the suburbs battle those from downtown. Health is my priority, and this bill means we can lose too many vital health-creating programs.

What makes me proud to live in Toronto is that it's clean, it's fairly safe and it's multicultural. It's a city where community individuality is celebrated and where there is local control. Local control and local input, in my mind, are what makes this city great.

In conclusion, I feel the government should be bringing communities together, not tearing at the fabric of the

city by undermining municipalities, creating divisiveness and acting against the will of the people.

I'd be happy to take any questions.

**Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights):** Jennifer, thank you very much for your presentation. I'd like to just propose a scenario for you. If there was an opportunity for the Metropolitan Toronto area, made up of the various municipalities that make it up, to improve their lot, to improve the life of the citizens, do you not think that everybody would be supportive of it?

**Ms Green:** Are you asking me if Bill 103 is going to do that?

**Mr Kwinter:** No, I'm not talking about Bill 103. I'm talking about just the general concept: If this was going to be good for the people, they would be supporting it.

**Ms Green:** Yes.

**Mr Kwinter:** Obviously either the government has not sold them on the merits of what they're doing or people are not accepting what they have been told is going to happen and that's why they're objecting to it.

**Ms Green:** I feel actually that this is not so much about this bill only; it's about centralizing power. It fits into a broader agenda, and the bill has not been considered for its merits in and of itself because it has no foundation in research, as we have heard earlier, and it certainly hasn't convinced the citizens of Metro Toronto. I think the reason it's still going ahead is because of the broader agenda that's there.

**Mr Kwinter:** I happen to agree with you. I think the agenda has more to do with money than it has to do with providing better government. I think there's an issue here where the government is trying to get its hands on money to be able to deal with its other agenda. Do you agree with that?

**Ms Green:** Certainly I agree, yes.

**Mr Sergio:** Can we separate the two, the megacity and downloading, or do they have to go together? Do you think the agenda of the government is that in order to accomplish the effect of the downloading, it has to deal with the megacity the way it is dealing with it?

**Ms Green:** I think the plan will not work effectively without the megacity.

**Mr Sergio:** What about the effect of the downloading?

**Ms Green:** Absolutely horrible.

**Mr Sergio:** How do you think it's going to affect — if you really want to know what people think of what the government does, any government, if their taxes will go up or down, they will give you a very quick reaction. We know with this one here, from the facts which have been provided by the various mayors and other people, that taxes will go up and services will come down. Do you think it's proper for a government to want to impose on the people of Metro some things that are not going to work?

**Ms Green:** No, absolutely not. I think you're right; it's totally unfair of the government.

**Mr Sergio:** Do you think we should delay this bill and bring it back?

**Ms Green:** I don't think we should ever bring it back, actually.

**Mr Sergio:** I don't mean bring the same thing back. I think we all agree that something has to be done, that

some changes are needed. I don't think that because the branches have overgrown and it needs trimming, we should cut down the tree completely.

**Ms Green:** Exactly. A very good analogy.

**Mr Sergio:** I think we all agree with that. So it's not a question of bringing out exactly the same bill, but we have had the Trimmer report, the Golden report and Crombie and they made some good recommendations. Would you say to the members of the government side here, send a message to the Premier and Mr Leach saying, "Go back, get out those reports, sit down with the mayors and come up with something we can accept"?

**Ms Green:** Yes, basically do your homework. I'll try and do mine.

**Mr Sergio:** They haven't done their homework, evidently.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Green, for coming forward and making your presentation this evening.

#### BRUNO MARCHESE

**The Chair:** Would Bruno Marchese please come forward. Good evening, Mr Marchese. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Bruno Marchese:** Mr Chairman, members of the committee, I want to take this opportunity to speak to you against your proposed megacity and the related downloading legislation. In my submission I will outline my rationale for your consideration.

**Amalgamation:** Your proposal to create a metropolis of almost 2.5 million people is not researched or well thought out. This bill ignores some basic economic principles, namely, the economies of scale and the law of diminishing returns — Economics 101, for those of you who took that course. Well-researched and academically accepted studies have stated that smaller and more compact cities of about half a million people are the most efficient and cost-effective. I challenge this government to produce credible economic impact studies that unequivocally prove that this bill in itself will save money.

I urge you to let amalgamations occur through negotiation and referenda. I personally would support the Golden task force recommendation of four cities and a GTA coordinating body as long as the residents of those communities support the proposal. The Golden task force understood that it is regional services that need amalgamation and that the existing cities within the GTA need strengthening. The proposed GTA coordinating body is what is needed here for the whole plan really to work.

I question the government's assertion that the current municipal governments are financially wasteful. There are regular elections, which many of you have been through, that these politicians have to become accountable for. Municipal politicians must face public scrutiny at election time. If politicians are not doing their jobs, they will be voted out of office, as some people who used to be in this place know. That's the democratic process.

I want to talk to you a bit about downloading. I agree with genuine disentanglement, but your mega-week announcements were about downloading, not disentanglement. What I'm trying to say here is that you're looking at transferring your debt to the municipalities. These costs

of soft services are just not sustainable at that level. Your action is no better than what the federal government has done to this province, downloading its budget deficits on to the provinces.

Municipalities have three choices at budget time to fund the increased responsibility. They can't legally run deficits, as you know. They are going to have choices. They can raise property and business occupancy taxes, they can cut or eliminate current or proposed services or they can introduce user fees. I suspect that there will be a combination of all three when politicians are faced with difficult decisions that affect people's lives.

By downloading responsibility without the companion taxing powers, you will be imposing your government's slash-and-burn agenda on the municipalities. I object to social services being funded by the property tax, which should be for services related to property. The progressive income tax should fund these soft services, which are unstable in nature and difficult to fund, given the legal and economic constraints on municipalities in the economic cycle. Since it has made sense for municipalities and school boards to fund a small portion of costs that are locally administered, funding should continue to be shared at an acceptable ratio. It has made sense for a government that is paying for a service to have some policy input. This ratio should be negotiated with the municipalities and school boards in good faith.

I want talk to you about your election promise of a 30% income tax cut. I believe this promise is what has motivated your mega-week announcements. You have discovered that you can't afford it any more and you're letting the municipalities pick up the tab. Your government has often said that there is only one taxpayer. I agree. I disagree that only the income tax should be cut. If you must keep your ill-conceived income tax promise, I suggest you cut property taxes and raise income tax in a revenue-neutral manner.

## 2000

The Fair Tax Commission proposed that soft services and education not be funded by property tax and shifted to income tax. It created economic models that assumed a 10-year phase-in reduction in property tax and an equal shift to income tax. The data show a modest increased total tax in the higher tax brackets and a corresponding decrease at the lower income level. The people in the lower-level tax brackets benefited most. This group is most likely to spend any tax savings and help boost the economy. I propose that you implement the Fair Tax Commission recommendations and abandon your downloading proposal.

On market value assessment, the Fair Tax Commission recommended that unit value assessment was the most preferable form of property tax because UVA was the most compatible form of tax that serviced property. It took lot size and the necessary related services to the property into account when calculating property tax with an acceptable market component relating to area rental costs. UVA is better than the market value assessment proposal for the following reasons: It's less susceptible to market forces that inflate the realty prices; people like seniors on fixed incomes have a more stable tax bill and can budget their money more carefully; with a more predictable tax bill, ability to pay can be budgeted for;

tax appeals will be limited because the criteria for tax assessment will be difficult to challenge; and finally, municipalities can count on stable revenue and they can budget accordingly.

I wanted to talk to you a little bit about election law reform. I'm currently involved in the referendum campaign in my neighbourhood, which is the city of Toronto, ward 11. I just wanted to state that the Magna Carta stated that free men were people who owned property. All others were not free men, according to the Magna Carta. In municipal elections we have something similar by allowing property owners to vote even though they are not residents at that property. This doesn't exist at any other level of government. It is offensive and should be changed. All citizens should have equal voting rights and residency should be the only criterion for voting.

I wanted to also talk about the Election Finances Act as related to municipal spending, mostly because of what happened in my community some years ago. Municipal spending limits have too many loopholes. Currently a candidate can register to run in one ward, spend the limit, close down the campaign and start a new one and in this way circumvent the spending limit. This is a ludicrous situation, it is unfair and it should be stopped. There is no financial disclosure after a candidate has filed with the election finances commission. There are no records kept after that and there's no record of where that campaign debt has gone to.

Anyone who has canvassed in this referendum knows how bad the voters list is. Your proposal for a permanent voters list has merit, but only if it is administered properly. A thorough door-to-door enumeration should be carried out every two years and municipalities should coordinate revision offices in the interim period.

In closing, I urge you to abandon your ill-conceived mega-week announcements and let the people decide on this issue.

**Mr Silipo:** Given the short time, just on the referendum, because you raised a number of points, I've been suggesting, and certainly many others have as well, that the government simply cannot ignore the will of the people. If, as we all expect, there will be a strong vote against the megacity on Monday in the referendum processes across Metro Toronto, do you agree that is the way the government can, if it really still has any sense of respect for the democratic process, use this as the way to say, "Maybe we made a mistake here; we need to sort of take another look at this whole issue and find a graceful way to back out"?

**Mr Marchese:** If that's what they need, fine. I think it's a bit more fundamental than that because they're going to have to face the people in two years, on their record. As we saw last week in the various town hall meetings held throughout Metro, they got the message. It was loud and clear and they should listen to it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Marchese, for coming forward and making your presentation today.

JIMMY JOHNSON

**The Chair:** Would Jimmy Johnson please come forward? Good evening, Mr Johnson, and welcome to the committee.

**Mr Jimmy Johnson:** The last two provincial majority governments have been accidents. Bob Rae and the NDP won a majority because the voters did not want David Peterson and his Liberals any more, and Mike and the Conservatives were not seen as a change. In the last election, Mike and you Conservatives won because the NDP and Bob Rae had fallen from grace, and the voters could not vote for Lyn McLeod and her Liberals because of her flip-flopping on the issues.

When you were out there trying to get elected, you talked about common sense, but you never, ever mentioned the amalgamation of Metro. If you had, we would not be here tonight, because you would not have got yourself elected. You also never mentioned that you would download more tax responsibility to the municipal level than what you are taking away. Again, if you had, we would not be here because you would not have got elected.

I've attended two meetings in Scarborough to try and get the facts about Bill 103 and how it will save me, a taxpayer in the city of Scarborough, money. I've asked two MPPs to show me the facts and figures you people have. Mr Gilchrist sent me a package of propaganda, there were no facts and figures in the package, and when I asked Mr Newman, he couldn't answer the question. I'm here tonight to ask you to show me the facts and figures that you, the government, have that will save me, the taxpayer, money.

Presently in Scarborough I pay \$25 per year for snow and ice control. How much will I pay under Bill 103? I didn't think so.

**The Chair:** Mr Johnson, would you stick to your presentation first, and if you want to leave the questions out there —

**Mr Johnson:** The questions are part of the presentation. I'm here to get the answers.

**The Chair:** I realize that.

**Mr Johnson:** So you just handle your end of it and I'll handle mine.

**The Chair:** That's exactly what I'm doing, Mr Johnson.

**Mr Johnson:** Okay. I pay \$197 per year for local parks in Scarborough. How much will I pay under Bill 103? I pay \$97 per year for library service. How much will I pay under Bill 103? I pay \$45 per year for garbage collection. How much will I pay under Bill 103?

If you continue down the road and pass Bill 103, here is some factual information you should know going in: If the six Metro fire departments are amalgamated, Scarborough's per capita tax for the fire department will go from the lowest of, \$64.94, to \$92.77, and that's based on the 1995 Metro fire statistics. The city of Toronto's will come down from the highest, of \$134.57, to \$92.77.

Finally, you do not have a mandate to do what you are doing, and we, the people, are entitled to the democratic process more than one day every four years.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Johnson. You have plenty of time for the government caucus to make comments, ask questions and perhaps answer questions.

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** Mr Johnson, thank you very much for your presentation. There have been a

lot of deputations coming forward and suggesting their perception of a connection between the amalgamation and the announcements made on the transition or the transfer of responsibilities between municipal and provincial governments. If that's the case, what in your opinion would require the province to amalgamate the municipalities in Toronto in order to deal with the transfer of services? Why do you see that as a connection?

**Mr Johnson:** In order for you to download what you intend to download to us, it's far easier for you to download it on a Metro-wide basis. If you try and download it to Scarborough or Etobicoke or York or East York or whoever separately, they'll go broke trying to pay their share. But if you download it on a Metro basis, it's far easier for you to do it. That's why everybody says that these are hooked in together. Even though they're separate issues, they are hooked in. You have to have megacity to have mega-download, no question about it.

**Mr Hardeman:** I don't agree with you, but if that were the case, don't you see that most of the transfer of responsibilities is going to the regional government where you have the Metro corporate now, that your downloading suggestions would apply to Metro?

**2010**

**Mr Johnson:** I see what you people are saying, but I'm saying to you, and people have already said this earlier, that most of us like what we have right now. We don't see anything major wrong with this thing. We see some minor changes that need to be done. Very minor surgery needs to be done, but when you people try and amalgamate and make things better, you're going to make a big mess. Just the fire departments alone, you can't put them all together without a great deal of cost and a mess to be put forward, because they're not compatible with one another now. They work in conjunction with one another but they're not compatible.

**Mr Hardeman:** On the fire departments, if I could just for a moment, Mr Johnson, what do you see that would be so difficult about putting them together?

**Mr Johnson:** Radios, for an example, just a simple thing of communications. Everybody has their own communications setup, so you would have to do away with six of them and keep one, and then you would have to have separate areas like the police have, because you can't transmit right across the whole of Metropolitan Toronto. The other part of it is that you seem to think that by taking away these individual chiefs and creating one chief — one chief can't run a fire department of that size. He's going to need deputy chiefs or assistant deputies, whatever you want to call them, and you've already got that right now. You've already got chiefs in Scarborough, in Etobicoke, in North York and they're all doing that job. The work is being done and there's no problem with the service. They overlap when they have to overlap. If Scarborough has to go into North York or North York has to go into Scarborough, they do it every day.

**Mr Hardeman:** You don't see a saving, then, having one training centre for firefighters instead of four?

**Mr Johnson:** No. The training centres are already there.

**Mr Hardeman:** You don't see any savings that were achieved when they amalgamated and centralized the police services in Metro?

**Mr Johnson:** They didn't save money when they amalgamated the police. They're saving money now but they didn't save money in the initial amalgamation of the police.

**Mr Hardeman:** But you feel that was an appropriate action to take, to go to Metro policing?

**Mr Johnson:** Not necessarily.

**Mr Dan Newman (Scarborough Centre):** Good evening, Mr Johnson. Good to see another one of my constituents down here today. I've been sitting in on the hearings, listening to all the presentations for and against. A couple that I want to mention to you and get your comments on — one is a former politician and one is a current politician.

Tony O'Donohue spoke about the object of the entire exercise that's going on here being to find the best practices that are being conducted in each of the existing municipalities. Norm Kelly, the current Metro councillor for the Scarborough-Wexford area, said the problem with what is happening is that all six municipalities, with the exception of Metro, are acting efficiently and that that is the problem. He felt that through amalgamation the savings would be realized because everyone is doing a good job; we have six people doing a good job when one could do it. I'd like to get your thoughts on those two presentations.

**Mr Johnson:** I think he's right. I think we are doing a good job separately. The old story is, if it ain't broken, why do you want to try and fix it? Leave it alone.

**Mr Newman:** Okay. So you're happy with the status quo, then?

**Mr Johnson:** Quite.

**Mr Newman:** There's no need for change?

**Mr Johnson:** There might be some minor things, but nothing major, and that can be done through negotiations. It's not up to me to decide and it shouldn't be up to you guys to decide. It should be up to the people involved in the day-to-day stuff.

**Mr Newman:** Is there any advice that you could give us?

**Mr Johnson:** Yes, listen to the people. Let them have their say. You've already had people here ahead of me weeks ago telling you the same thing: Let the people understand what's going on, give them an opportunity, talk to the regions outside of Metropolitan Toronto and do it right if you're going to do it. Don't do it half-assed and screw it up. If you push it down somebody's throat, they're going to spit it back up at you because they're not going to like the taste of it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr Johnson, for coming forward and making your presentation.

#### LESLIE SOOBRIAN

**The Chair:** Would Leslie Soobrian please come forward? Good evening, sir. Welcome to the committee.

**Mr Leslie Soobrian:** Good evening, Mr Chairman and members of the standing committee. As you heard, my name is Leslie Soobrian. I appear before you this evening

for the opportunity of occupying the next 10 minutes to support Bill 103.

I have been a resident of Metro Toronto for almost three decades. I have lived in the city of Toronto, in East York and Scarborough and finally moved to North York in 1974, where I've since resided. I have a family: a wife and two teenaged boys.

As a resident, a small businessman, a small landlord, a community worker and a sports administrator in Metro Toronto I have felt the inconvenience, experienced the frustration, witnessed the confusion, been hurt by poor services, been amazed at the waste and duplication, the relentless and irresponsible behaviour of some municipal politicians and local government. I think the time is right to act.

I am very angry. So are hundreds of thousands of Ontarians who are fed up with the many layers of government that contribute to the waste, duplication, added costs and inefficiency and too much bureaucracy of local government.

Those who oppose amalgamation are saying that it will increase costs and reduce services. As a businessman and an accountant, I understand all about fiscal responsibility and prudent management. As a taxpayer I have the right to demand such from my local government. I support Bill 103 because I believe that amalgamation will save money for taxpayers of Metro Toronto in a unified city in which services will be more accessible. One government will mean a simpler, more accountable, less confusing system of local government. Financial experts KPMG, a firm that is credible with a high reputation locally and internationally, predicts that up to \$865 million could be saved over the first three years and \$300 million annually from there on.

These are the some of the financial facts that I think the mayors and local politicians and those who oppose Bill 103 should be discussing with the public, rather than acting as scaremongers and trying to manipulate their local residents and special interest groups in an effort to save their jobs and to protect the status quo.

A unified city with 2.3 million people will create growth and strength. It will have more clout internationally, bringing investment to the area, boosting the local economy and creating jobs. We know the situation with our high unemployment today in Canada, and I think Metro Toronto can play a very important part in a unified government. If we set the infrastructure right, we can encourage investment into this province, into Metro Toronto, and lead the way to job recovery. That is something I think members of this committee should think about.

The benefits of streamlining in the new city of Toronto will be enjoyed by all its residents. Experience in other Ontario jurisdictions indicates that operating expenses can be reduced without any reduction in services. The artificial and invisible barriers between current municipalities will be removed while communities and neighbourhoods will be strengthened.

Some people are saying that we will lose our community, that the community will lose distinctiveness. I don't think so. I think our local community will continue to keep its distinctiveness.

**2020**

In 1966 we had amalgamation. The provincial government of the day reduced the number of municipalities from 13 to 6, creating the city of Toronto and the boroughs of North York, Scarborough, Etobicoke, York and East York. Although the villages of Forest Hill, Swansea and Long Branch and the towns of New Toronto, Mimico, Weston and Leaside were gone as municipalities, they are very much alive today as vibrant and distinct communities.

History has proved, there is a track record to prove that amalgamation is an ongoing process. It's not here to destroy anything. It's here to create efficiency. It's here to improve the lives of people within the municipalities.

I can refer to some of those frustrations that I talked about earlier in my opening statement. As a businessman and a consultant, I have been dealing with city halls, I've been dealing with municipal governments with respect to zoning, with respect to the bylaws. I represent clients just starting a new business. If you want to open a small grocery store on the corner and you want to put up a sign, you have so much red tape to go through. That is not fair. Small business brings employment. Small business is responsible for employment in this province, and yet we create red tape to prevent them from operating efficiently.

Why do we need seven parks departments? As the president of the Commonwealth Cricket Association of Toronto, an organization that promotes cricket — we have 40 clubs — let me tell you something. We've been operating for 20 years and I've gone to all three levels of government: regional government, Metro and North York. We've been trying to get water pitchers on the playing field for 20 years, and you know what we have been told every time we ask? "It's Metro works," or, "It's Metro parks," or, "It's Metro Toronto," or, "It's North York." Nobody seems to have a clear jurisdiction in what they're doing. We have a confused system.

People today don't know who to approach for what. We don't have any clear definition. We don't have any clear direction. They all seem to be duplicating our efforts in the local governments. It's time we stopped that. Unifying the six municipalities indeed will save money, indeed will reduce duplication, indeed will cause less confusion, indeed will create a stronger and better Toronto for all of us, for our children, for our grandchildren to live in in the future.

**Mr Kwinter:** Mr Soobrian, I apologize, when you started, did you say you were an accountant?

**Mr Soobrian:** That's right.

**Mr Kwinter:** I just want to ask you about your comments on the KPMG report. You said the facts are that it'll save this money and that they are a very reputable firm; if they say it, it's fact. Is that what you said, more or less?

**Mr Soobrian:** It's a prediction. I said these are the facts in the prediction that should be discussed publicly. I don't think the opposition to Bill 103 has really gone out and looked into the KPMG figures.

**Mr Kwinter:** The reason I say that is we have Deloitte and Touche, another reputable firm, that virtually dis-

counts what KPMG has said. If you are an accountant you know that if you were representing a client and you took that statement to the bank, they would throw you out because it's got a total qualification. They did no original research. All the figures were provided to them by the ministry. I had an assistant who had a favourite line. He said, "Consultants borrow your watch so they can tell you what time it is."

What they did is say to the government, "Give us the figures and we'll churn out something you can use." But there isn't anybody, and I say this with all respect, who is prepared to defend the KPMG study. There isn't anybody.

**Mr Soobrian:** They're two different reports and two different opinions, and I strongly believe in the KPMG report as you strongly believe in the Touche report.

**Mr Kwinter:** No, I don't. All I'm saying is that with the KPMG report there is nobody who is prepared to say this figure is correct. Even the government is not prepared to say it, although they say this is what they made their decision on. They said this is their research that justifies what they're doing, and there is no one outside the government, and with all due respect yourself, who think it's a valid document.

**Mr Soobrian:** I think it's a valid document —

**The Vice-Chair:** Excuse me. I'm sorry, we've run out of time. I want to thank you for appearing here this evening.

#### SANDRA FLEAR

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Sandra Flear, please. Good evening, Ms Flear, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Ms Sandra Flear:** I brought a written statement. I don't do this very often so I'm a little bit nervous. I just want to say that I came today because I want to state my opposition to the amalgamation of the six cities and Metro Toronto into one city. Many of the problems of amalgamation have been raised already, so I am going to keep my deputation short and to one point. The point is about the responsibility of elected officials.

The point I want to make is that people are precious and fragile in many ways, and so are the places where they live. Anyone who has any power to affect these precious things has a burden and privilege of responsibility, and I'm sorely disappointed in the way the Ontario government has borne its responsibility. The reason I'm disappointed is that I don't think this government sees its position as a responsibility but as a position of power over others, and it is behaving irresponsibly because of this.

The way this irresponsibility shows up in this case is in an inability to really listen to people affected by the government's decisions. It is clear most people do not want amalgamation, so it should not be done. We are not in a crisis where things have to be done quickly. Good decisions are made slowly with much thought, discussion and experimentation.

I do not care if this government has only a limited amount of time in office to put in their agenda. This is

not important. People's lives are important. I believe the only responsible thing this government can do is to stop Bill 103 and to continue from this point on with slowness, collaboration and care. Anything else I think forfeits the legitimacy of their position.

**Mr Silipo:** I won't use up all the remaining time, but I did want to ask Ms Flear a question. Would you agree that the government so far hasn't listened when the Speaker told the minister at least that what he was doing was inappropriate in terms of the flyer he sent out? The government seems not to have listened, although there's a mixed message there when the judge has told it that the appointment of the trustees was illegal. The government seems to be indicating it's not prepared to listen to the referendum results even if they clearly say no.

**Ms Flear:** Yes, I think that's the most obvious.

**Mr Silipo:** It seems to me they're going to be in a very untenable position as a government if they persist in that attitude if there is a clear objection by the voters, as we expect there will be next Monday. Would you agree that is the case?

**Ms Flear:** Yes, of course.

2030

**Mr Silipo:** I've been suggesting, and many others have as well, that the referenda results are perhaps the last remaining way in which not only can people who live in Metropolitan Toronto express their view and try to make their views known in a very clear way and put pressure on the government, but it also I think is the way the government can try to get itself out of the corner it has painted itself into.

Even if we were to leave aside all the rationale about why they're doing this and whether it's really because of the megacity or whether it's all connected to the downloading, as I believe it is, it seems to me that if they really have any kind of respect left at all for the democratic process and see any kind of sense themselves of not having, as you said, power over people but really having a responsibility towards the electorate, the referendum is also the way out for them in terms of saying, "We thought we were doing the right thing, but clearly people either don't understand or don't accept what we're doing, so we're going to stop what we've done and go back to the drawing board and take a look at the problems that have to be dealt with that many people have been telling us about as to the GTA coordination being the primary responsibility we should be tackling, and then within that look at what kind of sorting out of responsibilities we need to be doing at the local level."

Do you see that as a way in which the government could almost find a face-saving way out of this dilemma they've put themselves in, and more importantly put all of us in?

**Ms Flear:** I think they could save face in many ways. I think that just stating they want to reconsider it all — I don't even think they need to have some excuse. That would give me a lot more respect for them. But if they feel they need to have some way to save face or whatever, yes, the referendum would be such a clear and easy way to do that.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Flear, for appearing here this evening.

## SEATON VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

**The Vice-Chair:** I'd like to call on Brian Mayes, please. Good evening, Mr Mayes, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Brian Mayes:** I don't know if I can match the previous speaker's admirable brevity, but I will try.

My name is Brian Mayes. I am currently the co-chair of the Seaton Village Residents Association. I don't claim to speak on behalf of everyone who lives in our neighbourhood, but I think I'll give you what I see as an accurate reflection of the feeling in our neighbourhood. Seaton Village is a small neighbourhood in the city of Toronto bounded essentially by Dupont, Bathurst, Bloor and Christie and it lies within Mr Silipo's riding at present.

I will ask your indulgence. Normally I don't read comments, but I've just come from a 22-hour bargaining session for security workers of Metro Housing, a round of bargaining that's been much complicated by the introduction of Bill 103. I'm a bit not at my best, so I will read at least part of my presentation.

Certainly the people in Seaton Village are opposed to the amalgamation, I think largely around questions of democratic access. Right now we have easy access to our city and Metro councillors. Anyone who's gone down to the city of Toronto council knows that you can depute in front of committees but not in front of the council. Often you're waiting all day at the committees. There's enough of a backup simply at the city of Toronto council. I think there's a real fear about how much access there's going to be if we go to one megacity-wide council.

The people in Seaton Village are also opposed to the downloading of funding responsibilities. I think Seaton Village residents justifiably fear that a property tax increase produced by Metro's enormous tax deficit will be caused by the downloading. I think the fear is that if property taxes don't increase to cover that deficit, there is a genuine spectre of some American-style problems. We're already seeing the introduction of for-profit ambulance service in the province. I obviously have serious concerns about what's going to happen to some of the social housing buildings, given that the union I work for represents a lot of those workers.

In travelling around the city I also think about an area like the High Park area. This area has a strong sense of community. That sense of community will survive amalgamation, but can it survive the introduction of actual value assessment and the erosion of long-term health care?

Similarly, in an area like East York, people are rightfully concerned about the loss of local elected representatives and the threat to a well-established community, a community that will be hit by higher taxes, loss of services and a greater gap between the rich and the poor.

Finally, I was at a meeting in North York a few weeks ago where Gordon Chong, who is a Metro councillor at present, told residents not to worry because no megacity councillor would ever raise property taxes 18%, which is at least possibly what you might need to raise property taxes to cover off the downloading deficit.

Mr Chong is probably correct in that statement, but what does that mean? I think it means erosion of health

care in the city, it means erosion of housing standards and it means erosion of public transportation. He's probably right in saying someone who wants to be re-elected isn't going to jack up your property taxes 18%, but it means you're going to see some serious cuts at the municipal level.

All that being considered, my sentiment is that I personally and Seaton Village residents are opposed to amalgamation. At least part of our role here is to suggest amendments to the legislation. If the amalgamation does go ahead, I feel it should be on the following basis:

(1) It should be on the basis of an open vote in the House, as we've seen on some important and controversial legislation in the past.

(2) Any offloading would be cost-neutral for Metro Toronto, not the current deficit that's going to be created. Some people say it's \$300 million; some people say it's \$800 million. Obviously, that's a penalty that's going to fall on Metro as a result of the downloading.

(3) I attended a meeting in December that Mr Gilchrist ran to talk about the introduction of this bill and at that time I said, "When will the boundaries be set, and why is it only 44 megacity councillors?" The answer seemed to hinge around, "We've got to build off the federal ridings."

I don't think it was ever adequately explained to me why it was 44. Why not, say, 66? That I think would help address some of people's concerns about the loss of democratic — instead of representing 50,000 people, you'd represent 30,000 people, to round off the numbers. Maybe that should be a transitional thing for an election or two. Certainly, Winnipeg, as it merged in 1971, had a larger city council than it does now. It has gradually shrunk the number of councillors. God knows, there's going to be a lot of work for whoever's elected to that first council in terms of the transitional arrangements.

Everyone I've talked to has said, "They'll really have to staff up, these councillors, if there's going to be 44 of them." If some of the money can go towards having more elected people, that's preferable than simply having additional staff budgets.

As a final note, I was struck by this bargaining I was involved in over the last 22 hours for Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, struck by what the tenants there will face, which is that they've already had a cut in their social assistance in the past year and now they're looking at a cut in the housing stock and in the repair budget for that housing. The people I was bargaining for do security there. We've been told these may be the first people to go. I don't think that's why this government was elected.

What is the spectre that raises? Loss of security, loss of repair to these buildings, loss of income to these people. I think the spectre is a very dangerous one and the potential is towards the kind of downtown you see in some of the larger American cities.

That concludes my comments.

**Mr Hardeman:** Thank you very much for your presentation. I have just a couple of questions. You talked about the representation and why 44. I wasn't sure I caught it. Were you suggesting that, even staying with the boundaries, increasing that to 66 would better serve the people of the area, to have 66 politicians doing the job?

**Mr Mayes:** I think the explanation we've heard is that right now there are 106 municipal politicians and we need a smaller number. There's no magic to 44. There were 23 federal ridings before the current redistribution. Now there are going to be 22. If you'd done this legislation a year ago, you'd have been talking about 46 instead of 44. Similarly, as the feds redistribute each time, the boundaries are going to shift around. There's no magic to 44, I would suggest.

**Mr Hardeman:** I would suggest maybe there's no magic to 44, but I guess the issue is of fair and equitable representation and accessible representation. If you go to Mississauga, every councillor in Mississauga represents 64,000 people, which is 14,000 people more than would be represented by a representative on the 44-member council.

**Mr Mayes:** The number in North Bay is probably smaller.

**Mr Hardeman:** Incidentally, they also serve on the regional council; they serve in both capacities. So far we haven't had a lot of residents from Mississauga suggesting we should double the size of their council or someone should double the size. No one seems to be asking for more representation. I'm just curious why you would feel that would be different in Metro than it would be in other jurisdictions.

**Mr Mayes:** Clearly, you're not talking about going from 106 up; you're talking about going from 106 down. So whether you go down to 44 or down to 66 and base it on the existing federal riding boundaries is obviously the issue in discussion. We're not talking about Mississauga, "Let's arbitrarily increase the number of municipal politicians." In Metro Toronto you're talking about a reduction. I think the issue is, in a public policy sense, what is the wise number to reduce to?

#### 2040

**Mr Hardeman:** On the other issue, the realignment of services, in your opinion, what part of creating a unicity impacts the realignment of services? Obviously, it's happening at the same time, but what, in your opinion, would make the realignment of services different if the unicity proposal was not being debated presently?

**Mr Mayes:** One could argue that amalgamating will save or one could argue that amalgamating, pure and simple, will increase, but that's frankly an academic debate in this context. This bill is going on with a downloading of funding. It would be an interesting academic debate, and that's being engaged in by some people, but my concern is with the actual announcements around ambulance and long-term care and social housing, those sorts of things.

**Mr Hardeman:** It's fair to say then that the debate on Bill 103 is not the realignment of services; it's about the amalgamation. If we separate the two, would your people still be opposed to Bill 103?

**Mr Mayes:** It is hard to separate the two. As I said, there's certainly a concern about loss of access to a local elected official and I think there is concern about a council that's going to have 44 people for the whole of the Metro area. If you're asking, "If the downloading weren't happening, would people feel somewhat differently?" it's an academic question, I guess.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much for being here tonight, Mr Mayes. We appreciate your coming.

TED BUTLER

**The Vice-Chair:** Ted Butler. Good evening, Mr Butler, and welcome to the standing committee.

**Mr Ted Butler:** I am appreciative of the time that has been allotted to me tonight to come here, and I come here as a resident of the city of York, a constituent of MPP Mike Colle, and as a supporter of the government's plan to amalgamate the six Metro municipalities into one city, the city of Toronto.

This new megacity, or to use the Toronto Star's term, supercity, for me is a natural progression for the Toronto area, its evolution. Clearly, it is taking our existing operations and making them better. I think that all concerned will admit that our current system is far from perfect, and so much has changed since the first Metro government was put together in the 1960's. At the time, Metro was a very ambitious concept and the plan had to overcome much scepticism, as is the case with the government's plan today.

Consider how much has changed in the Toronto area in the years since Metro's inception. The population has grown exponentially, the need for roads has increased, as well as the need for public transit. The 401 is now a 16-lane highway. It was intended to be a bypass around Toronto. There are three and a half more subway lines now than back then, and none of today's great downtown skyscrapers were built yet, let alone the major office towers in North York, Scarborough and Etobicoke. No SkyDome, no CN Tower, no convention centre, no National Trade Centre, no Ontario Place.

There were no calculators, let alone computers on the desks of city staff, no voice mail — maybe that's the way it still should be — no cell phones, no fax machines, no e-mail and no Internet. All of these tools, good or bad, are here to stay, and over the past 20 years these tools have facilitated a revolution in the way business is done. These tools allow us to do more with less.

In the early 1990s many corporations were forced to realize that we are living in the post-industrial era and that in order to continue as viable businesses, major changes had to occur. Articles about corporate restructuring have dominated business publications for the past few years. They are full of anecdotes outlining the how-to and what-to, and what we should expect in the process. But they all seem to maintain one common thought, and that is, no matter how painful it is, companies must evaluate and improve their business practices in order to survive in today's competitive environment.

What does this have to do with Bill 103? What Bill 103 is offering us is opportunity. It is the opportunity to improve our current system. The province and the municipalities were not adhering to sound financial management for much of the last 10 years, and as the government of the day makes its run at good financial management, it has become clear that the structure of municipal government must change in order to provide its customers with sound financial management practices.

As Mel Lastman said in 1983: "We look like idiots not amalgamating. Why do we have all these works depart-

ments and health departments, all this overlapping? Why do we need all these treasury departments and building departments? The work could all be done out of one big office."

In September 1983 in the same newspaper, the Toronto Star, Lastman was quoted as saying that he had done a lot of soul-searching lately and had come to the conclusion that it was ridiculous to have six fire departments, six works departments and six of everything else in Metro Toronto.

Thus we arrive at this day 14 years later, preparing to go forward and improve the structure of municipal government in the Toronto area. I believe that we must attempt to change. Past governments have spent a lot of time and money analysing the concept, but nothing came of those past efforts. We are now at the point of committing ourselves to the plan that is outlined in Bill 103. We can release ourselves from this state of analysis paralysis and go forward, because the fact is that if we do not seize the opportunity and go forward and change today, we'll be faced with having to do it tomorrow.

It seems that those most vehemently opposed to amalgamation were at one time great supporters of the concept. My own MPP, Mr Mike Colle, was at one time the chairman of a group called Reform York. The goal of this group was to amalgamate York and East York with Toronto and some of North York into one Metro borough called Greater York. In October 1983, as a member of York council, Mr Colle was the only supporter of a motion that was defeated 9-1 to amalgamate York with North York and Scarborough. In the 14 years elapsed since then, Mr Colle, I cannot see what has happened to change your mind. What has changed since April 10, 1982, when you said to the Globe and Mail that York should be disbanded "because we find our taxes are the highest in Metro and our services, if not the worst, are among the worst in Metro"?

I bought a house three blocks to the north of Mike Colle in March 1994 and I feel the same way now as he did back in the 1980s. I appreciate the level of effort that the city of York staff puts out. I find them hardworking, courteous and professional, but they are fighting a war they cannot win without money or access to it. Why is it that when I walk to the bottom of my street to buy my groceries or enjoy a meal at any one of the friendly restaurants along St Clair Avenue, the dollars I'm spending are not supporting my community? No, I'm wrong. They're supporting my community; they're not supporting my municipality. In a united Toronto I wouldn't have this problem. By extension, maybe we could solve the problem of areas such as Oakwood and Vaughan by giving them access to the greater tax base that would exist instead of the dwindling resources the city of York has to devote to such problem areas.

Among the many interesting pieces of information that Mike Colle sends around to my home is how to appeal your property taxes, a service that he offers through his constituency office. As an aside, I wonder how vocal Mr Colle is around the caucus table when it comes to criticizing Mr Eves's tax cuts. For my money, Mr Colle has put more money in the hands of my neighbours than any politician at Queen's Park today. I fail to see the

value in encouraging people paying only \$2,000 a year in property tax to the municipality with the lowest assessment rolls in Metro to appeal their tax rates.

I received this piece of literature at my home today, outlining the problems with Bill 103. This piece of literature is a reminder of what is for me one of the weaknesses of party politics: the concept of opposition for the sake of opposition. For me, Bill 103 is in its initial draft. It's not perfect and I'm sure that the minister, in his wisdom, will make amendments to the main body of the bill as a result of the ideas brought forth by these hearings. After all, that's why we are here tonight.

I have already outlined what a strong supporter and what a crusader Mike Colle was when it came to the concept of amalgamation. Why then would he use his party money or his money as an allowance of the Legislature to mislead constituents such as myself about the concepts of Bill 103? The least he could do is offer us an alternative, much as he did 14 years ago. But then again, perhaps he's just disappointed that he ran for the wrong party, or maybe he's just another flip-flopping Liberal.

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My time for speaking is coming to an end and I would like to make one more point. As I said before, we're on the verge of making big changes to the business practices of this city. Should this legislation pass, all of us will be asked to make some adjustments. Let us maintain the belief that we are making life better for those who follow us. We should aspire to leave behind a system that will serve the citizens well for years to come and provide them with a system that in time they will improve on, as we are improving ours.

Finally, the time has come for us to accept the responsibility of moving forward. Let's make the improvements to the bill presented to us today and get on with it. If we at least start, we can always come back and tinker with it later, and everyone in this room knows that we will. Thank you.

**Mr Sergio:** Thank you for coming down and making a presentation to our committee, Mr Butler. You said that if we don't do it now, if we don't do it right, we'll never do it. But you also said —

**Mr Butler:** No, I didn't say that.

**Mr Sergio:** Not in those words, but you said that we've got to do it now, right?

**Mr Butler:** Now is the time.

**Mr Sergio:** You want to do it right, right?

**Mr Butler:** Let's go, let's do it.

**Mr Sergio:** Let's go. Also, at the beginning of your presentation you said that we've got to make some changes, right?

**Mr Butler:** Yes.

**Mr Sergio:** Are you saying then that we should halt what we are doing, get this bill back on the drawing board, let's plan it right? What you're saying to us is —

**Mr Butler:** No, I didn't say that at all.

**Mr Sergio:** Hold it a second —

**Mr Butler:** Is there a question?

**Mr Sergio:** Yes, it's coming. If we don't do it right, you say we're going to come back and tinker with it. Wouldn't you want to do it right the first time?

**Mr Butler:** Do we ever do anything absolutely right the first time? Everything we've ever done in this country

is perfectly right? How many provinces started out in Confederation, four or 10?

**Mr Sergio:** I'm asking the question, wouldn't you want to do it right the first time?

**Mr Butler:** I'll take this as a start. I'm happy with a start.

**Mr Sergio:** But then we're doing it wrong, aren't we?

**Mr Butler:** Was Rome built in a day?

**Mr Sergio:** To me it doesn't make any sense that we have a huge opportunity — you, the government, everybody — to do it and do it right. We agree as well that we've got to make some changes. We do agree with that.

**Mr Butler:** I think you missed the first thing I said, that I'm a supporter of the bill, so in that case I would agree then that it's right. Maybe there are a few minor changes we could make, but —

**Mr Sergio:** I see. Such as? What kind of changes would you make?

**Mr Butler:** Offhand I'm not an expert on it.

**The Acting Chair (Mr Dan Newman):** Your 10 minutes are up, Mr Butler. Thank you very much for appearing before the committee.

#### MARK RUBIN

**The Acting Chair:** The next presenter is Mark Rubin. Good evening, Mr Rubin.

**Mr Mark Rubin:** My thanks to the committee members who are still here. I hope that copies of my remarks will reach the several absent members. I know I'm last on the agenda. I know we're running a bit late so I'll try to be swift.

My name is Mark Rubin. I live in Etobicoke. I'm a small business owner. I have three children. I have no affiliations with any political party or group. I do, however, share the very serious concerns of a great many citizens about Bill 103 and about many of the other recent government initiatives as well.

I came to Toronto 29 years ago to attend the photo arts program at Ryerson, and one of the reasons I chose Ryerson was because I was so favourably impressed with the city of Toronto when I first visited to check things out. Having been born and raised in Detroit, my first impressions of Toronto were typical of virtually all Americans who visit here: a real amazement at the city's cleanliness, safeness and vitality. Once I was living here my appreciation of Toronto, of Ontario and of Canada grew and grew, to the point where I chose to remain here permanently after my studies were completed. I became a Canadian citizen as soon as possible and I have lived and worked in Metropolitan Toronto ever since.

As a former American and former resident of Detroit, surely one of the saddest and least functional of all North American cities, I have always been really interested in analysing and trying to understand just what it was that made Toronto so much better in so many ways, and the longer I've lived here the more I've come to feel that out of the many positive factors working in Toronto's favour, one of the most significant has simply been good local government.

Certainly in Detroit, and in at least the majority of other American cities as well, the dominant feeling about city government was that it was something that was really

remote, something that was pretty well irrelevant to most people's lives, something that was almost totally ineffective and something that was probably totally corrupt. City politics just wasn't something that very many people knew much about or cared much about, and it certainly wasn't something that anyone in their right mind would ever try to do anything about.

You can imagine my surprise, as a newcomer to Toronto, to discover how different things were here. Toronto's city politics, in very marked contrast to Detroit's, aroused a great deal of public interest. It included a great deal of public involvement. It was very relevant, was treated very seriously and, most significantly of all, it was very accessible.

City politicians in Detroit really existed in their own cloistered little world. You didn't know any of them and, what's more, you really didn't want to know any of them. Toronto's city politicians, on the other hand, were our neighbours. They were people one did get to know, and they were people who actually could be and frequently were reached and communicated with by average citizens like me. It was this sense of accessibility, above all else, that initially impressed me the most about Toronto's city politics. It is this sense of accessibility that has continued to impress me as one of the more positive and distinctive aspects of life in Metropolitan Toronto, and it is this sense of accessibility that will almost certainly be lost in the proposed megacity.

This is the most basic reason why I feel amalgamation is such a bad idea. Within a larger, more centralized government, there is just no way that the average resident like me will be able to feel the same sense of connection.

As for the myriad other issues surrounding the amalgamation debate, I don't pretend to understand all the ins and outs. Will it really save money? The government tells me it will; many others tell me it won't. Will it really be more efficient? The government tells me it will. Many others tell me it won't. Will it really be good for the residents, for the region and for the province?

It's certainly all quite complex and confusing, but within this confusion two islands of clarity stand out. The first is that the government has certainly not presented the least shred of evidence or logic that would justify the major changes it is proposing and the major risks that these changes represent. The second clear conclusion is that even if amalgamation did save money and even if it did work more efficiently, we would still, at the very least and to a very significant extent, lose our sense of accessibility, lose our sense of connectedness and relevance, lose our sense of community. These, to my mind, would be losses that would far outweigh even the most optimistic of the government's hoped-for gains.

I realize of course that my objections focus on intangibles, and if there is anything that can be said with certainty about the present government, it's that it does not have a very good handle on intangibles. It really seems that for this government quality of life is a totally foreign concept.

It's exactly the same whether the issue is government, education, health, social services, long-term care, child care — the list goes on and on. Every government initiative that has been brought forward in every one of

these crucial areas seems to be guided by one principle and one principle only, and that of course is deficit reduction. Of course the government does throw in all the right words — "better," "fairer," "more efficient" etc — but the only word that it really seems to have any true understanding of or interest in is "cheaper."

The government really seems to have absolutely no concern about and indeed no clue about the seemingly obvious fact that drastic spending reductions must have and will have drastic social consequences, and that drastic social consequences must and will bring serious long-term economic costs; in short, that if we ignore social issues now, the few dollars we save today will cost us many times those few dollars down the road. Yet, in blindly following its overly simplistic agenda, the government either ignores or really is oblivious to this simple and very crucial fact.

In closing, I would offer the government these final few observations and predictions.

My observations are, first, that a lot of people who voted for this government in the last election have already realized that the PC Party now in power bears little or no resemblance to the PC Party that governed the province in previous years with honour, moderation and reasonableness.

My second observation is that a lot of people like me, who have never before been very politically active, are now becoming seriously concerned with the government's direction, seriously angry about the government's tactics and seriously motivated to get involved.

For my own sake, my children's sake and indeed the entire province's sake, I really would like nothing better than to be shown that my concerns and anger are misplaced. To do this the government would simply have to slow way down, ease way up and demonstrate that it is indeed listening to and heeding the many calls to reason that are currently being shouted from so many different directions.

But if the government does not heed these calls, if it continues hastily pushing through its agenda — in short, if the government continues to stay its current arrogant, shortsighted and very confrontational course — then I would offer the following very sure bets.

My first bet is that a great many of the people who still support you today will soon come to realize that even if they still agree with you in principle, the way you are going about things is hopelessly ill advised and counterproductive.

My second sure bet is that people like me will be part of an unprecedented public groundswell of opposition to your government, that we will fight your bad initiatives in every conceivable way possible, that we will work very hard to make sure that your government is thoroughly repudiated in the next election and that the result for the Tories will make the Tory showing in the last federal election look like a landslide.

My third sure bet is that the first order of business for the next provincial government will be to try to undo at least the worst of the damage that your government will have done.

My final and surest bet of all is that all of the present government members, and particularly those who have meekly followed their government's leadership without so

much as a dissenting murmur or independent thought, will have the distinction of being forever after known as having been willing and obedient cogs in what history will surely remember as Ontario's worst, most divisive and most destructive government ever.

**Mr Silipo:** Just very briefly, Mr Rubin, do you see that the referendum results on Monday, if they are as we expect them to be, based on the polls, opposed to the megacity, give the government an opportunity to say: "Whoa, prepare to roll back. We've made a major mistake here"? Is that sort of the last opportunity the government has to be able to respond and to deal effectively with this issue?

**Mr Rubin:** If there is a clear indication in the referendum, along with all the other voices that have been raised, many coming from former Conservatives, although not as many of those as I would have hoped, yes, I hope the government will take this opportunity to really rethink and go back, not just make a few amendments and a few concessions but really go way back and think this thing through properly.

**The Vice-Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr Rubin, for coming tonight.

This committee stands adjourned until Monday morning, March 3, at 9 o'clock.

*The committee adjourned at 2104.*







## STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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Mr Tony	Ruprecht (Parkdale L)
Mr Tony	Silipo (Dovercourt ND)

### **Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:**

Mrs Margaret	Marland (Mississauga South / -Sud PC)
Mrs Lillian	Ross (Hamilton West / -Ouest PC)
Mr David	Turnbull (York Mills PC)

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**Greffière par intérim:** Ms Lisa Freedman

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